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# Concordia Theological Monthly

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## The Sacerdotal Office of Christ According to the Epistle to the Hebrews\*

By GEORGE STOECKHARDT

BY His one sacrifice Christ has obtained an eternal salvation, which requires nothing to supplement it. By His sacrifice our sins are expiated once and for all, and our iniquity is atoned. In the very center of our Christian faith stands this Jesus Christ, who on the great Day of Atonement of the New Testament died and shed His blood for us. But even though Christ sacrificed Himself only once, even though the real work of redemption and reconciliation is completed, yet Christ has not relinquished His high-priestly office. The Epistle to the Hebrews throughout directs our attention to the Man sitting at the right hand of God as our eternal High Priest.

### IV

*The Exalted Christ Even Now Continues to Administer His Sacerdotal Office by Making His Merit Effective Before God in Heaven and Applying It to Sinners on Earth.*

By suffering and death Christ was exalted. After Christ had died for our sins, God again brought from the dead this Shepherd, who laid down His life for the sheep. And He did this "through the blood of the everlasting covenant," 13:20. The exaltation of Christ was brought about by the blood of the new covenant. The blood of the New Testament, the one offering of Christ, is the cause for His exaltation. Christ shed His blood and thus carried out

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\* Second and final section. See note in previous issue, p. 483.

the will of God concerning our salvation. Through His blood He established an eternal covenant and thus completed the divinely appointed work of redemption. Thereupon God exalted Him, brought Him again from the dead, and thereby accepted and endorsed what the great Shepherd of the sheep had accomplished by the shedding of His blood. Hence we may rest assured that the new covenant, which Christ established by His blood, is in effect.

The writer of this Letter draws another significant analogy between the Old Testament high priest and Christ. The prototype entered into the holy places made with hands, but Christ entered into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us, 9:12, 24. This refers, as the writer points out, to Christ's exaltation, even as the Lord in His valedictories to His disciples summarized His suffering and death, His resurrection and ascension, in the term "going to the Father."

But how and why did Christ enter heaven? By His own blood He entered into the holy place, 9:12. The preposition *dia* often describes the attendant circumstances, e. g., under duress, with fear, by or through compulsion. In the Old Testament the high priest entered the sanctuary *through* blood; the blood granted him access. However, he entered also *with* blood, which he carried into the Holy Place and sprinkled upon the Ark of the Covenant. Thus he brought the blood before God's throne. All this applies to the antitype. He entered *through* and *with* blood into the sanctuary of heaven.

But here the analogy ends, for Christ "appeared in the presence of God," 9:24. True, the prototype also went into the Holy Place of God, stood before the throne where God dwelt and sat enthroned. But He did not actually come into the presence of God, for He dwelt there in a cloud and darkness, and even this screened glory of God was veiled from the eyes of the high priest by the smoke of incense with which he first had to fill the sanctuary. Our High Priest, on the other hand, appeared in the very presence of God. He is the eternal Son of God, "the brightness of His glory and the express image of His Person," 1:3. He is as great as the Father Himself. He can step into the unveiled presence of God. And He appeared there with the blood of reconciliation. As the blood of the Old Covenant was brought close before God when

the priest sprinkled it upon the horns of the altar or upon the Ark of the Covenant, thus Christ brought His bloody merit into God's presence, before His very eyes, as it were. Yes, it has found entry into the heart of God and has erased the guilt of sin. Our sins are erased from God's memory. God sees only the blood of reconciliation, only expiation and grace. When our memory recalls old sins and when new sins are added—for as long as we live, we can never entirely and completely forget sin—we have the comfort that the memory of our sins has been removed from the heart of God by the merit of Christ's blood. In the heart and conscience of the sinner there is still much fear and wrath; in God's heart there is only peace and love. If our conscience accuses us, we are to know that it is an erring conscience; for with God there is no longer any remembrance of sin.

Christ remains a Priest forever and at the right hand of God discharges the duties of His sacerdotal office until the end of days, 8:1-2. As Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle, Christ "is faithful to Him that appointed Him . . . in all His house," 3:2. He faithfully performed the duties as High Priest in procuring salvation for all men once and for all. However, Christ still faithfully discharges the duties of His sacerdotal office by showing that His precious sacrifice is now in force before God.

This is accomplished when we come to Jesus, the Mediator of the New Covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel, 12:24. Abel's blood cried to God for vengeance. By Christ's blood, however, reconciliation was made, and it cries for mercy, not for vengeance. And it does so continually and with a loud voice. It cries, as it were, into the ears of God, "Mercy! Mercy!" By His death Christ expiated sin and gained grace, and, anthropomorphically speaking, it constantly reminds God of what happened on that first Good Friday and Easter. When we become guilty of sins of commission and omission, we comfort ourselves with this eternal redemption, knowing that our sin has been erased and buried in the depths of the sea. But our comfort is increased by the fact that Christ's blood constantly speaks for us, raises its voice in our behalf, and reminds God of our reconciliation. Our conscience acts in a strange and peculiar manner. For a long time it ignores past sins, only to raise its voice unexpectedly against

us. Here is the antidote against an accusing conscience: Christ's blood, speaking in heaven, drowns out the voice of our conscience. God does not hear our conscience; He pays heed only to what is said by Him who is the express image of His Person. Thus Christ constantly intercedes for us in heaven, 7:25. We have an Advocate with the Father, who constantly reminds God of His redemption by showing, as it were, His pierced hands as signs of our redemption. Thereby He assures us that God's wrath will not again be kindled against us when because of the weakness of our flesh we so often fall into sin. There is nothing in us on which we can base a claim for grace, else grace were not grace. But Christ has paid the penalty of our guilt and thereby has established His right to demand grace for us. God must and will heed our Advocate's intercession.

But our High Priest's continuing office is not confined to His intercessory work in heaven. The blood of Jesus Christ that speaketh better things than that of Abel is also "a blood of sprinkling," 12:24, similar to the Old Testament sacrificial blood. Sinful mankind is to be sprinkled with Christ's blood. This sprinkling of "our hearts from an evil conscience," and the washing of "our bodies with pure water," 10:22, points to Holy Baptism. In Baptism Christ applies to sinful man the merit gained by His blood. There the hearts of sinners are sprinkled with the blood of Christ, as Luther sings,

The eye of sense alone is dim  
And nothing sees but water;  
Faith sees Christ Jesus and in Him  
The Lamb ordained for slaughter;  
It sees the cleansing fountain, red  
With the dear blood of Jesus,  
Which from the sins, inherited  
From fallen Adam, frees us  
And from our own misdoings.

*Ev. Luth. Hymnbook, Ed. 1927, No. 401, 7*

Baptism is the means whereby Christ's merit by blood is applied to us. The writer of the Letter, however, refers also to the other means of grace, namely, the Word. "For unto us was the Gospel preached, as well as unto them," "For we also are evangelized, even as they," 4:2. This Word is "quick and powerful" (*zoon, energiees*), 4:12, and is the means whereby Christ's merit is applied to us, and

our hearts are sprinkled with the blood of Christ. It is this thought that is expressed by the hymn writer,

When darkness round me gathers,  
Thy name and cross, still bright,  
Deep in my heart are sparkling  
Like stars in blackest night.

L. H., 407, 3. Germ. 426, 3

Thus through Baptism and the preaching of the Gospel our hearts and consciences are sprinkled with the blood of Christ. The blood of Christ constantly heals us from sin, destroys the sense of guilt, and suppresses the memory of sin, even as it cancels the remembrance of sin in the heart of God and stays His wrath.

However, it is faith, and faith alone, which lays hold on this antidote against sin. And it is part of Christ's sacerdotal service to engender and preserve faith. Jesus is the Author and Finisher of our faith, 12:2. He sprinkles us with His blood, purges and justifies us constantly by His Word. By this Word He creates in our heart the hand which takes hold of and retains this treasure. He works faith, and He also perfects it by preserving us in faith until our end.

Christ is a Priest forever after the order of Melchisedec, and is therefore Priest and King in one and the same person. According to this Epistle, Christ places His royal office into the service of His sacerdotal office. It is the office of a king to provide his people with all those things which bring prosperity. So Christ also procures for us, His people, all manner of blessings and riches. Like His prototype Melchisedec, who is the king of righteousness and also king of Salem (peace), 7:2, Christ as our King has procured righteousness and peace for us. Thus also the royal office of Christ with its blessings serves His chief work, that of purging us from sin and saving us.

## V

*In the Name of the Redeemed, Christ has Even Now Accepted the Promised Inheritance in Heaven, and will Deliver It to Them at His Return.*

Christ is called an "High Priest of good things to come," 9:11. The writer explains this in the light of the ceremonies of the Great Atonement. On that day not only the Ark of the Covenant,

but also other vessels of the sanctuary as well, shadows of heavenly things, were sprinkled with the sacrificial blood. These holy vessels had become defiled by being handled by the priests, sinful men, and had to be purged again and reconsecrated with the sprinkling of the sacrificial blood. Lev. 16:18-20. It was therefore necessary that the antitype, "the heavenly gifts," must be purged and sanctified with sacrificial blood, with the "better sacrifices," namely, with the singular sacrifice of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, 9:23. Stripped of its Old Testament symbolism, the meaning is: sin has excluded us from heaven and deprived us of our right to heaven. If we would enter heaven, sin must be abolished. Christ has blotted out sin with His blood. By the blood of Christ, heaven's sanctuary is dedicated and its doors reopened to us sinners. We now have a perfect right to heaven; it is ours by the blood of Christ. The truths which are here expressed in highly figurative language are usually stated quite simply as follows: By the shedding of His blood Christ has earned for us, first, forgiveness of sins and, second, life and salvation. Thus Christ is the Mediator of the New Testament, by whose death and blood we were purged and shall also receive the promise of eternal inheritance, 9:15.

The Christian's hope of eternal life is not only glorious, but also firmly established by two immutable things: God's promise and His oath. Therefore our hope is likened to an anchor, which firmly holds the vessel in the surging sea. The sailor lets his anchor down into the depths of the sea; the Christian casts his anchor upward into the innermost part of the veil, into the sanctuary of heaven. There our anchor, our hope, has taken a firm hold and will not let go. By it we are, as it were, chained and bound to heaven. Our hope as Christians is a living, firm hope, which even here takes hold of eternal gifts and actually ties us to heaven.

Our hope is firm and reliable, like an anchor, because Christ has already entered within the veil and is now sitting on the throne of God. Since Christ, who is in heaven, is the object of our hope, we are bound, as it were, by this hope to the heavenly inheritance. Christ is our Forerunner. As our Substitute He entered within the veil, and as our Representative He is enthroned in heaven. This heavenly sanctuary is now also our goal, and our union with Him in the sanctuary is our glorious hope.



After Christ had tasted death for every man, God crowned Him with glory and honor, and we now see Christ enthroned in divine majesty, 2:5-9. But the holy writer evidently wants us to view Christ's exaltation also from its vicarious side. Christ has become the Captain of our salvation, v. 10, and as our Representative He has accepted in our stead the inheritance destined for us. The author of our Epistle quotes Ps. 8:4-8 and identifies the "son of man" as none other than Christ. In this Psalm the Son of Man appears as the Representative of mankind. The Psalmist points to the fact that all beasts, sheep, oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field, the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the sea, are put under His feet. The words remind us of the first chapter of Genesis. God had delivered the rule over all creatures of the earth into the hands of man. It was God's will that man should rule over creation. To be sure, in a large measure this will of God was hindered by sin. However, there is one Man by whom God's original destiny for man is fulfilled, who has passed through unto the dignity originally intended by God's will for all, namely, the Man Christ Jesus. And this Man Jesus, our Substitute, is crowned with glory and honor after His suffering and humiliation. He is in heavenly glory. But in heaven, too, Christ represents the human race. The same glory which He has in heaven is intended for man. The same beauty and glory lost by the Fall, Christ as man's Representative has regained by His life, suffering, and death, and in His exaltation. Christ sits at the right hand of God in that glorious dress designed for us. In Him man has already been elevated to that heavenly dignity and glory which he is to have. As our Vicar Christ has even now in our name received the heavenly inheritance and preserves it for us. Not only have we a rightful claim on heaven, an open door to heaven, not only is the anchor of our hope fastened there, but Christ has already prepared and beautifully adorned our future home for us. He Himself dwells in exalted glory, and in Him we have taken possession even now of our heavenly inheritance.

In a certain sense we share in this heavenly inheritance even now. This inheritance is not only a future possession, for we are "come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the

heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and Church of the first-born which are written in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect," 12:22-23. Some commentators wish to restrict this description to the Church of the New Testament; others to the congregation of perfected saints. But no doubt, both are in the writer's mind. Through faith Christians have come nigh unto the heavenly holy place and are in close contact with the spirits of just men made perfect. The believers on earth and the saints in heaven are essentially one congregation. If we could look through the veil, we would see the Church Triumphant, the glory which is to come, and the inheritance ready for us in heaven. In faith and hope we possess this salvation and glory even now.

Only one thing is required before we shall see and enjoy all that which we now possess in faith and hope. That, too, will come to pass, when at His second appearance Christ will deliver our inheritance to us. The first time Christ came to be sacrificed for sin, and He was manifested in sin. Sin, as it were, characterized His first appearance in the flesh. But at His second coming He will appear without sin, 9:28, clothed in all the glory and splendor which is now His. At His first manifestation He blotted out sin once and for all. On that Day His redeemed children will hear not a syllable of sin, for He will appear unto salvation and personally give them who await His coming the fullness of good things to come. He already has taken charge of our inheritance, is enjoying it, and will impart it to those whom He leads to salvation. In His final priestly service He Himself will give eternal salvation to us poor sinners who had excluded ourselves from heaven. He will let no one deprive Him of this prerogative. This gift will not be conferred on us immediately. On the contrary, our High Priest wants to experience the joy of personally pressing this inexpressibly glorious gift into our hands. Then the final consummation is at hand.

But Christ remains a Priest forever in name and in fact. To be sure, there is no longer any need of His sacerdotal and mediatorial service, for all earthly mourning is changed into praise and thanksgiving. We have been made perfect and behold God face to face and no longer need to flee into the wounds of Christ. But Christ,



our High Priest, will be the very center of heavenly worship, even as St. John beheld the Lamb which was slain from the beginning surrounded by the whole number of saints and receiving eternal praises. Christ in His sacerdotal office will be the theme of the heavenly doxologies. The strains which here give all glory to that blood by which we have been redeemed will resound in the heavenly Jerusalem throughout eternity. There we shall worship Him who is our flesh and who has purchased us with His blood. The worship of eternity is worship of the Lamb that was slain for us.

## VI

*This Sacerdotal Service of Christ Enables and Obligates Us to Come to God with All Confidence and to Serve the Living God.*

The first practical consequence of this doctrine is this, that we are empowered and obligated to come to God with all confidence, 4:14, 16, and especially 10:19-24. We have a faithful High Priest. He has opened unto us the way into the sanctuary. And this way is a new and living way, a way which actually carries us to heaven. The blood of Christ incites and gives courage to walk this way. But we must also make use of our prerogative, we must come *en pleerophoria pisteoos*. The holiest place is open to us, for it is a throne of grace, and we must approach it with joy. In our prayer we draw near the living God, and this is a joyful experience. True, our first reaction is, that because of our sinfulness we are not worthy to come into the presence of God. But we comfort ourselves with the knowledge that Christ, our High Priest, intercedes for us and prays with us. In our prayer we remind ourselves that Christ's blood avails in heaven and that nothing can sever us from God. Trusting in Christ's merit, we speak to God with full assurance of faith and pour out our heart to Him, yes, speak as confidently with God as children with their dear father. Thus by faith and prayer we are to draw near to God's throne of grace. Then we will also hold fast the profession of the hope which Christ has gained for us, though our experience often seems to contradict our hope and to be incompatible with the things beyond the veil, the inexpressible glory reserved in eternity for us.

The doctrine of Christ's priesthood teaches us furthermore to serve the living God. By His sacerdotal office Christ has made us

priests before God. Therefore we are obligated to purge our consciences from dead works to serve the living God, 9:14. The purpose of our redemption is that our life be a continuous divine service. We must serve God with reverence and godly fear. To that end we have received a kingdom which cannot be moved, 12:27-28. If we do not walk as citizens of heaven in reverence and godly fear, we shall lose the joy of eternal life and fall under the wrath of God, v. 29. Thus this article of Christ's priesthood obligates us to newness and holiness of life.

Not only the Christian life as a whole, but also its various aspects and phases may be viewed as the service of priests. It is significant that in this Epistle the several admonitions are based upon the sacerdotal office of Christ. The writer again reminds the Christians that they have been redeemed, that they are heirs of life eternal, and that therefore they will also in sincere gratitude serve God. As priests they will continually offer the sacrifice of praise and joyfully declare the name of Him who has done so much for them, 13:15. To the fruit of our lips we will add the fruit of works. Christian conduct is Christian warfare, and that is a constant conflict, 12:1-13. But the courage and joy for warfare can come only when we look unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith, 12:2, as well as our great Exemplar in this warfare, who through battle blazed the trail to victory, v. 3.

The struggle ordained for us Christians includes also the sufferings. Battle and blood go hand in hand, 12:4. But Christians must patiently bear their cross, and they will do so if they remember that God loves them, 12:5-11. True, in the midst of suffering it seems that God is displeased with His children. But the very blows are the strokes of a loving Father. He is reconciled with us by Christ. Hence He holds nothing against us. His seeming wrath is nothing but love, a fatherly chastisement. On the basis of this comfort we shall not only be able to bear every cross patiently, but shall raise our lame hands and feeble knees and make straight paths with our feet, not being turned out of the way as that which is lame, but rather be healed, 12:13.

A special cross to be borne patiently by the Christians is the reproach for the sake of Christ. This was typified in the Old Testament sacrificial cultus. The goat whose blood was brought

into the sanctuary by the high priest was burned outside the camp. Christ, likewise, was slain without the gate. The identity of Golgotha is shrouded in mystery, except for the fact that it was outside the limits of the holy city. To be cast out of Jerusalem was a deep reproach for Christ, 13:10-12. And Christians will fare no better than did their Lord and Savior. They must come out of the sinful corruption of Jerusalem, separate themselves from the world, and thus share the reproach with Christ, v. 13. But it is by way of reproach that Christ ascended to honor and glory. Likewise Christians, who here have no continuing city but seek one to come, v. 14, must travel via the cross to glory.

The Christian life is a warfare not only with the world, but also with his flesh. Therefore a Christian must daily put away the sins which still cling to him and make him slothful. He must guard against such a vulgar, Epicurean, carnal mind as Esau had, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright, 12:14-16. A Christian will not prefer the vain, corruptible things of this world to the heavenly treasures. Two reasons prompt our sanctification: the first, lest any man fail of the grace of God; the second, that without holiness no man shall see the Lord. Sanctification, of course, does not earn grace, holiness, the beatific vision, and eternal salvation. Nevertheless he who does not earnestly strive after holiness will lose heaven and its bliss.

The last, but by no means the least, phase of the Christian life is loving service to our fellow man. We are to serve God by serving our neighbor. Therefore the holy writer admonishes each Christian to abound in works of love, and at the same time by word and deed to provoke the brother to love and good works, 10:24. If, for example, a brother forsakes the assemblies, we should admonish him, v. 25. And when Christians keep in mind their High Priest's concern for them, 10:19,21, they will endeavor to manifest the same interest in their brethren. Their brotherly love will continue unabated. They will practice hospitality, visit the prisoners, and sympathize with the afflicted, 13:1-3. These works of brotherly love are God-pleasing sacrifices and stand in intimate relation to Christ's sacrifice. Anyone who neglects to offer the eucharistic sacrifices of his lips and his hands is in danger of losing that one sacrifice on which his hope is built.

As preacher and curate of souls the pastor will always keep in mind the fact that all ethical injunctions in this Epistle are based on the priesthood of Christ. Every admonition and every invitation to practice brotherly love and to follow after holiness must be based on the article of free grace, namely, on the glorious truth that Christ blotted out every sin of our entire life. The pastor will constantly remind them of this and implore them as redeemed children of God to walk in newness of life in gratitude to Him who has redeemed them. This motivation will be effective, for only through Christ's blood and merit can anything good be effected in the lives of the Christians. Thus even when the pastor admonishes or warns his people, the Gospel remains his central theme.

## VII

*Whoever Rejects the Sacerdotal Service of Christ and Willfully Serves Sin Incurs the Wrath of God, Which Is a Consuming Fire.*

The theme of the entire Epistle is that the Old Testament priesthood typifies Christ's sacerdotal office as the only means whereby we can obtain our eternal inheritance and our heavenly rest. In developing this theme it is but natural that the holy writer also speaks of Israel's attitude toward the service which God in His grace had instituted for His chosen people. Israel had spurned God's gracious promises to lead them into the promised rest, and because of its unbelief came short, 3:18-19. It is therefore within the framework of this Epistle when the holy writer uses Israel's example as an earnest warning against unbelief and apostasy, 3:7-8, 12 ff. This admonition is always in order, for the danger of apostasy always confronts us. The Hebrew Christians were inclined to look back with longing eyes to the synagogue of Israel. But a return to Jewry was tantamount to a return to the world and unbelief. Therefore the writer presents the New Testament priesthood in its glorious light and pleads with them not to despise it.

It is indeed significant that the Epistle which presents the loftiest comfort of our most holy faith also contains the most incisive warnings against unbelief. In language which cuts to the quick the writer describes the catastrophic end, the final terrible consequence of unbelief and apostasy, 6:4-8. He speaks of such as were at one time true, believing Christians, have known and felt the

truth of God's Word, were enlightened by the Holy Ghost, have tasted of the good Word of God, were made partakers of the Spirit of grace, had experienced in their heart the joy of redemption so beautifully described in this Epistle for the comfort of Christians. In short, they have had a foretaste of the future glory and from personal experience knew that what they had learned from the Word of God is divine truth.

And concerning such the writer states the possibility of *paraesontas*, 6:6, they may apostatize. This means that they deny everything which they have experienced in their heart; they willfully again serve sin, though they know and have experienced the deadly poison of sin and, on the other hand, the blissful condition of those whose sins are forgiven. They tread under foot, i. e., treat with utmost contempt, the Son of God, count the blood of the covenant an unholy thing, that blood by which they have been sanctified and have received the forgiveness of their sins. The doctrine of redemption, once the joy and comfort of their heart, has become unto them a common and an unholy thing. They despise with their whole heart what once they had known as saving truth, 10:26-31. In addition they despise the Spirit of grace and declare that His witness in their hearts had only been a self-delusion. Yes, they may even say they have deceived themselves and others with their Christianity. This is apostasy in its final form. The Apostle is not describing every kind of falling away, for though a Christian may fall into mortal sins which destroy faith, he may repent and be received again. But he who sins willfully after he has received knowledge, 10:26, has reached the final stage of apostasy. Luther often calls this willful sinning after having tasted God's grace the "sin against the Holy Ghost." This willful sinning is not what we are wont to call mortal sin, it is something more fearful, namely, an eventual hardening in unbelief.

It is impossible that they who are guilty of this apostasy be renewed unto repentance because they crucified to themselves the Son of God afresh, 6:6. The Jews and their leaders and the heathen crucified Christ in ignorance. But it is far different when they who have come to know salvation in Christ, by their apostasy crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh. With all the powers of their

will they reject the Son of God and everything that reminds them of His work of redemption. Rather than to be partakers of the forgiveness of sins, they want to perish in their sins. In this state repentance is impossible. But their repentance is impossible for another reason. Such people harden themselves and have, as it were, ruined their heart and conscience to such an extent that it is like unfruitful ground which yields only thorns and briers. Therefore God delivers them unto a curse and to utter destruction, 6:8. They have no more offering for sin, having trodden under foot the great Offering of the New Testament. If death was the punishment for the transgression of the Law of Moses, how much greater will be the punishment of him who has disdained the merit of Christ and trodden it under foot? 10:27-29. Such an one will and must experience the solemn truth of the Lord's word: "Vengeance belongeth unto Me," 10:30.

The characterization and dreadful outcome of apostasy is recorded as a most earnest warning. The holy writer does not say that the Hebrew Christians had already reached this state, but he points to the ultimate end if anyone refuses to be warned. But such warnings are necessary for the Old Adam in the Christian, who is constantly inclined to apostasy; he must be told that there is a falling away from which it is impossible to rise again.

Let no one think that this is too strong a diet for our people, or that it is completely out of harmony with the sweet comfort of the Gospel. Whoever is really concerned to make the Gospel message meaningful to his hearers must at times pull also this stop. Such solemn warnings, too, serve to save souls, for the examples of final apostasy have only one purpose, namely, to preserve such as are inclined to apostatize or have fallen away, from a similar fate, lest they become completely hardened in unbelief. A pastor must at times preach the Law in this extreme form, so that his hearers will never be "of them who draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul," 10:39. Then his parishioners will give diligence to enter the rest prepared by their great High Priest, 4:6 ff.



# The Pastor and Synod's Handbook

By ARNOLD H. GRUMM \*

WHAT a dreary and technical subject for an occasion like this, some might say, "The Pastor and Synod's *Handbook*." Why not "The Pastor and His Bible," or "The Pastor and His Sermon," or something else that has living value? What compelling interest can the *Handbook* of Synod have for a graduate of Concordia Seminary who, call in hand, is ready to enter the active ministry?

There are those that look upon the *Handbook* of The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod with its Constitution and By-Laws as a tedious set of regulations that may be necessary as a guide for action for certain elected and appointed officials of Synod, but of no real lasting worth to anyone else. They say: "Most assuredly, you have to have some sort of regulations to govern procedure, but the less we have to do with them, the better off we are. Let the officers of Synod and of the Districts take these regulations to heart and remain within the limitations set by them, the rest of us will be free spirits governed only by the law of love." Then there may be those that are slaves of regulations and make of them laws that bind them in all things. They want everything covered by such regulations down to the minutest detail, and they are sticklers for exact procedure according to these regulations. For them these regulations have an overwhelming authority beyond what was intended for them.

The *Handbook* of Synod is of far greater importance than that which is conceded by the first group and nothing at all like what the second group pictures it to be. In this *Handbook* you will find embodied Scriptural principles that have helped give the proper God-pleasing form to our congregations and to our Synod and at the same time an effective control imposed by the Word of God itself. This *Handbook* can offer you an extremely helpful course in the fundamentals of a Scriptural church polity and in practical theology and can be very effective in helping you "know your Synod."

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\* The Rev. Arnold H. Grumm, President of the North Dakota District of The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod and member of the Committee on Constitutional Matters, delivered this address at the graduation exercises of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Mo., on June 2, 1950, at which time the Faculty conferred on him the degree of Doctor of Divinity, *honoris causa*. Since then he was elected Fourth Vice-President of Synod.

## I

One solid bit of advice you might glean from your *Handbook* is this: "*Don't ever try to by-pass or ignore the congregation.*" The congregation is God's own working unit. To it, by virtue of the believers in it, is given the power to preach and teach the Word, to baptize and to commune, to absolve from sins and to retain sins, to call pastors and teachers to perform these duties publicly in its name. The local congregation is self-governing. With it lies the power to make decisions in all matters pertaining to it and to its activities for Christ and His kingdom which are not regulated by God's Word. That is what your *Handbook* tells you repeatedly, for the authority and the self-government of the congregation is one of the two Scriptural principles which are basic in the church polity the *Handbook* recognizes.

Object 8 under Article III in the Constitution brings this to your attention at the very beginning of your study of the *Handbook*. One of the purposes of Synod, we are told there, is "the protection of . . . congregations in the performance of their duties and the maintenance of their rights." This means: if you as pastor have ridden roughshod over your congregation in promoting some activity in the Kingdom work, as, for instance, youth work, vacation Bible school, Sunday school, introduction of liturgical forms; if you have disregarded your congregation in these matters and have not sought a decision from this unit, the officers of Synod, if they were called in to decide between your actions and the rights of the congregation, would have to say: The pastor may have been right in seeking certain objectives, but was wrong in disregarding his congregation. The end does not justify the means. His means set aside the fundamental Scriptural and God-given principle concerning the rights and powers of the congregation. You may and should use persuasion, but never coercion, and you certainly should never ignore your congregation or by-pass it when planning and carrying out the activities you consider necessary and important for the purpose of advancing the Kingdom.

Article VII of the Constitution, which Trinity of St. Louis submitted as an amendment to the Constitution at the second day of the 1847 Convention, clearly safeguards the individual congregation's right of self-government. It rejects the use of coercive powers with respect to the individual congregation. It states very definitely that no resolution of Synod is of binding force upon the congregation . . . if it appears to be inexpedient as far as the condition of the congregation is concerned. This amendment was written in 1847. In a section of our



*Handbook*, 1.09 b, written a hundred years later, in 1947, we find this statement: "Synod, being an advisory body, recognizes the right of the congregation to be the judge of the resolution as applied to its local condition." After one hundred years the *Handbook* remains faithful to the basic principle that the congregation, according to the Word of God, is self-governing and that none of its God-given rights are to be abridged.

Not so long ago a student at an accredited college asked me to help him in the writing of a thesis on church government in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. I gave the young man my copy of the *Handbook* to use and showed him Article VII and section 1.09. I also called to his attention other sections in our Constitution and By-Laws that emphasize the basic principles in our church polity. Then we discussed church government in our Synod. After his paper was returned to him with a very fine grade, he said: "You'll get a ring from Dr. —. He was astonished at what I wrote. He demanded to see all the books I referred to. Then he told me that he could hardly believe that the congregations in the Missouri Synod had such authority and were granted such a wide range of self-government. He was sure that all of our churches took their orders from some central authority. He could not understand how it was possible for a Synod to function as a closely knit unit with congregations free to accept or reject the decisions of Synod. Yet there it was in the *Handbook*," said my young friend, "this right and power clearly stated. He couldn't get away from it."

Our founding fathers and the congregations in their charge learned the hard way that the idea of *ecclesia repraesentativa*, i. e., the Church as represented in the clergy, is unscriptural. Their Church was almost wrecked because of their reliance on a hierarchial form of church government. When therefore a study of the Confessions and of Luther led them to Scripture and a clear understanding of the functions, the rights, and the powers of a self-governing congregation, they wrote that principle into their congregations' constitutions and into the Constitution and By-Laws of the Missouri Synod. "A share of the credit for the success of the Missouri Synod in group perpetuation and group promotion must, no doubt, be attributed to congregational and synodical polity" (Mundinger, *Government in the Missouri Synod*, p. 218). Dr. G. H. Gerberding, in his introduction to M. L. Wagner's *The Chicago Synod and Its Antecedents*, agrees when he shows the lack of progress of other Lutheran groups in Indiana in the early days just

because there was no clarity in the matter of the rights and powers of the congregations.

Congregations are made up of fallible human beings, and as a result their decisions often seem to us to reflect attitudes that hinder and hamper the work of the Lord. Our founding fathers discovered that only too often. The synodical reports of the early years report various instances of trouble with balky congregations presuming too heavily upon their rights; but never once is there an effort on the part of Synod to ignore the congregation and its rights. Patient exhortation and persuasion are the methods recommended and used. Use that method, and God will be on your side if your purpose is His purpose, and He will see to it that His unit, the congregation, will in His time take the steps that need to be taken.

## II

Another necessary and important suggestion your *Handbook* has to offer you is this: "*Train your people to recognize your ministry as the ministry of the Word and that this Word is the supreme authority in the Church.*" This supreme authority and rule of God's Word, connected as it is with the ministry in our midst, is the second Scriptural principle that is basic in our church polity.

For Lutheran pastors trained in our schools this principle seems so self-evident. The founding fathers weren't satisfied to consider it self-evident. They embedded this principle deeply as a foundation stone in our Synod's Constitution. You can hardly turn a page without finding a reference to it. You find it in Article II, where Synod, and that includes *every member* of Synod, accepts without reservation "the Holy Scripture . . . as the written Word of God as the only rule and norm of faith and of practice and the Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church as a true and unadulterated statement and exposition of the Word of God." As the authority of the Word lies in the hands of the called pastors and teachers, Article III specifies that these workers must be properly trained by Synod itself, they must be supervised with regard to the performance of their official duties, they must be protected in the performance of these duties and in the maintenance of their rights. There is a tight, unified control in all doctrinal matters that are clearly taught in God's Word and in our Confessions. No pastor or teacher can be ordained or installed if, coming from another church body not in doctrinal agreement with us, he has not been properly examined as to his position in doctrine and practice. (4.55—4.61 . . . 4.75—4.81.) A congregation of non-Lutheran faith making applica-

tion to Synod for pastors or teachers must unconditionally accept the Bible as the Word of God, permit its pastor to minister in accordance with the Confessions of the Lutheran Church, after due instruction declare its willingness to sever its connection with any heterodox body with which it may be affiliated (4.05). These are just a few examples of the place the Word of God has in our official regulations as authority supreme. Every pastor and teacher had better be conscious at all times in his exercise of this ministry of the Word of the responsibility and trust placed into his hands. Train your people in understanding the authority that the Word has in their lives, do this in a winsome manner, treat your congregation as a self-governing unit in all other matters, and you will have welded together the two principles God has given His Church as basic in setting up and operating the right kind of church government.

Do not permit yourself to put more authority into your ministry than that which it has received as the ministry of the Word. Pastors are often tempted to do that. Men, women, and children that have learned to know and love the Lord Jesus Christ will have learned to love and respect him who comes to them as His minister and pastor. As Cornelius said to Peter, they say to their pastor: "Now therefore are we here present before God to hear all things that are commanded thee of God." There is a temptation to go beyond those things that are commanded of God and, getting into the field of liturgy or methods of doing work or raising money, to use the authority of your office summarily, and by your command to do away with everything that does not conform completely with what you consider the best and most efficient way to deal with such usages, methods, or forms. You can always get some sort of following if that is what you are looking for. But the danger for you and your people will be that as the human authority asserts itself over the congregation, the following will not be one that is hearing the voice of the divine Shepherd but of the human leader. That is going to be bad for you. You are getting away from the Rock on which the Church is built. For that you will have to answer to your Head Bishop. You are going to be tempted to get farther away and are in danger of becoming a legalist. That is going to be bad for your people and for every individual soul in your congregation, for nothing bewilders and leads souls away from Christ more readily than when His people are led to substitute the voice of men for the voice of God. This is going to be bad for your congregation, for it will finally break down the right kind of church govern-

ment. The rights of the congregation are going to be abridged, and in that measure the work of the Lord is going to be abridged.

We have spoken of Synod's solicitude for these rights and the provisions it has sought to make to safeguard them. Even against a pastor who usurps these rights Synod would like to help a congregation by making it possible to "supervise pastors and teachers with regard to the performance of their official duties" (III.7). It has arranged for regular official visits by chosen officials of Synod, who are to call the attention of congregations and pastors to the great objectives our churches must have (3.71). A careful reading of "Visitor and Pastor" (3.73) and "Visitor and Congregation" (3.75) will show you that Synod is interested in safeguarding the rights of all concerned, but is increasingly interested in this, that God's Word remains the one great Word of authority in the congregation.

Do not think it was easier for our founding fathers in their day than it is in ours to put into effect the principles of the self-government of the congregation and the supreme authority of the Word exercised primarily by the pastor as minister of that Word. Congregations had to be taken to task because they caused divisions and troubles in their refusal to bow before the Word. The 1848 report brings such an example. In 1849 Dr. Walther reports the suspension of a pastor because of repeated offense against the Word and an ungodly life. Pres. Wyneken complains of the many difficulties among the churches in respect to their attitude toward the Word; but he urges patience and winsomeness and instruction and prayer, yet never a letdown on either of the two basic principles of our church polity. With that sort of administration, God's blessing has rested upon your Church and mine these 103 years. It can continue to do so if you will continue to be guided by these principles, and you can find no better guide for their practical application than your own *Handbook*.

The professor who marveled at the fact that The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod gave such large powers to its congregations and yet marched on as one army did not realize the great unifying power of the Word. I called that to his attention. I sought to show him that the very people who had such great power of self-government had been led by the Holy Spirit through the Word from early youth to recognize the voice of their Shepherd whenever His Word was applied. Him they would follow implicitly. Our pastors were bound by a vow freely given to their one Master, Christ, to make use of the authority of this Word alone when guiding their people. Ours, then, was an inward

unity, which could be maintained only if pastor and people would continue to live in that Word and by that Word.

That is where you graduates come in. Your class is another group going out into the work in congregations of our Synod as ministers of the Word. You had better be certain that you have discovered and continue to discover for yourselves, with a conviction that comes only from God's Spirit out of the Word, the great truths of God that you are to offer your people and all that will hear you. You will discover as you get better acquainted with your *Handbook* that it is this sort of authority that it alone has in mind to perpetuate. Nowhere does it pretend to depend upon legal authority set up by men to force congregations in line. Its appeal is and remains an appeal to the Word, ever maintaining the self-government of the congregation in all other matters.

As you browse through your *Handbook*, you will note how marvelously this kind of church government has worked out. You will begin to be astonished at the large list of activities your Church is engaged in, how it has reached into every field of endeavor to preach Christ and to maintain congregations and pastors and teachers. You can compare the first regulations with those existing today. The elasticity of the regulations is astounding. The simple has become complex; the few activities have become many and manifold. Missions all over the world, educational programs for everyone from the cradle to the grave, minister- and teacher-training provisions, support and pensions, publications, public relations, radio and television, visual aids, the whole modern way of doing things on an increasing scale, all find their place in this expanded *Handbook*. Yet the fundamentals remain intact. The same basic principles, grounded solidly in God's Word, are the sound foundation stones for a church government in a Church which can number millions as they were for a Church which numbered thousands. You will also discover the one reason why under God all this expansion was blessed. It was because by His grace our Church today, as the *Handbook* shows, has kept the same basic principles of church polity intact. Do your part as minister of the Word to maintain these principles. Then God will continue to bless our Church because it exalts His Word and gives to His congregations the rights and privileges He has bestowed upon them.

Fargo, North Dakota

# The Buddhist Concept of Death

## A Study in Comparative Religion

By PAUL HEERBOTH \*

THE manifest turmoil and unrest of these latter days — atheistic Communism, idolatrous materialism, Iron Curtain barbarism, A-bomb fears, and now the "H" — are but a coarser outburst, a more inflamed symptom, of the fundamental problem of all centuries — "How can man in sin overcome his separation from God?" "How can man conquer death which without Christ makes this separation from God forever painful and forever permanent?" All mankind — also those who call themselves Buddhists — face this inescapable problem — the problem of death. Like all mankind, so also the Buddhists, though in a more comprehensive and attractive manner than some, have adorned themselves with fig leaves of human reason and good works, and behind the trees and bushes of borrowed, mutilated, as well as prefabricated theological and non-theological concepts, have tried to hide themselves from that penetrating voice of the Lord God, who is still walking in the spoiled Eden of this world, and is still calling from the pages of Genesis 3 with the words: "Adam, where art thou?" bringing to mind those terrible and unforgettable words: "Thou shalt surely die!"

If we are to find the right approach to prepare the Buddhist to meet God as his Father in Christ Jesus, we must know how the Buddhist plans to meet God. In other words, What is the Buddhist concept of death? We consult stateside encyclopedias, compare SCAP reports and statistics, interview Japanese authorities, consult the people themselves, and find the Buddhist concept of death a difficult one to define.<sup>1</sup>

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\* The author was commissioned in 1949 for service in Japan after spending one year in the Mission Department of the Postgraduate School of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. This article is based on the paper which he read at the organizational conference of the Japan Conference of The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod, in Tokyo, March 1—3, 1950.

<sup>1</sup> Eventually, by personal experience, or more immediately by careful research, the missionary to Japan will learn that there are not only six major groupings of Japanese Buddhist sects, but also that within these six groupings (Nara, Tendai, Shingon, Amida, Zen, and Nichiren) there are at least ninety-three subsects, plus eight unclassified sects. The total number of adherents is approximately



The Western mind, reared in the atmosphere of Christian or Jewish theology, will be puzzled if it approaches Buddhism with the expectation of finding in it something familiar. Pure Buddhism has practically no theology, it is basically a philosophy and must be so studied. Even as a philosophy there is no uniformity or common pattern. Japanese Buddhism is a conglomerate of so many conflicting systems that it is as confusing as contemporary Christianity with its Coptic, Greek Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and Protestant Churches. There are, however, some elements common to the teachings of most sects; such as acceptance of S'akyamuni Gautama as the founder of Buddhism, acknowledgment of his teachings as the essence of truth, conception of the attainment of Buddhahood as salvation, belief in the "three precious things" — Buddha, the law, and the Church — which S'akyamuni handed down to his followers, and belief in the three basic elements — morality, meditation, and intuition — as the proper approach to truth. . . . A Buddhist generally seeks salvation, depending on his sectarian affiliations, by following "the way" revealed by S'akyamuni, by obtaining the favor of the mythical Buddha Amida, or by apprehending "universal truth" and realizing the fundamental identity between himself and the cosmic Buddha Dainichi. Beyond these basic doctrines lies a maze of unrelated sectarian interpretations, speculations, and mystic rituals.<sup>2</sup>

Clarity and precision in presenting an over-all picture of Japanese Buddhism are so lacking that it is much too easy to generalize from a few particulars. This paper, therefore, will do no more than present the Buddhist concept of death as held by several individuals and as described by certain writers.

One dreary afternoon the writer went to the temple grounds to be guest of the Buddhist high priest of Sapporo. There in the parlor of his mansion, where everything is just the opposite of Buddhist self-negation, High Priest Ando, his scholarly wife, and their special research consultant held forth for four hours on the Buddhist concept of death. As high priest, Ando settled back into his stately chair;

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43,000,000. Buddhism dates back to A. D. 552, when it was introduced from Korea. In Korea it dates back to 372 A. D., when it was brought from China. In China it dates back to 68 A. D., when it was brought from the Indo-Parthian king Gondophorus. From there we trace Buddhism back through the central Asia of Indo-Bactrian, Indo-Parthian, and Indo-Scythian days, all the way back to about 272 B. C. when under King Acoka of the Mauryan dynasty the faith of Gautama became the religion of all India.

<sup>2</sup> SCAP, Religions in Japan, p. 37.

he enveloped himself in a halo of smoke created by his incessant puffing of "Peace" cigarettes. Soon he began to utter beautiful words framed in dental gold. In part he said:

You should not come here to ask questions about death; when death is coming; how death is going to affect me; what death is like, etc. Instead of asking these questions we should the rather overcome death and all suffering by conquering them with the mind. In Buddhism death is conceived as a form of suffering. As long as death does not give us any suffering, it does not concern us. *Therefore it may be concluded that death consists in suffering.* Likewise illness, old age, and birth consist in suffering. If illness would not be suffering, illness would not be what it is. Old age is dreadful just because one suffers from it. Birth, through which one enters into this sorrowful life, is something to be sorry about, because one must suffer it. Thus what is called in Buddhism "Four Sorrows," namely, death, illness, old age, and birth, have their reality in the fact that the human being suffers from them.

However, suffering itself has reality only in human thought. Let us suppose that there are visual sense and flowers and that there is no human mind to intervene. Then we cannot think that the flower is beautiful. The flower appears beautiful to us because we *think* it is beautiful. Beauty becomes real when human thought intervenes to make it so.

Death is dreadful to us because we make it so in our thinking. The suffering of death consists in our thought. Therefore to suppress the suffering of death, we must change our thought on death. Clear thought recognizes the fact that life must end with death some day or other. To the clear mind, death is not something which comes as a surprise. If you expect the coming of death as a matter of course, you should not be surprised or sad when it comes. When you were born, the ultimate destination of your life was death. The suffering of death is due to the fact that we do not want death to come—which, of course, is impossible. Our suffering of death comes from the fact that we want the impossible thing to be possible. We desire this impossibility because we are lacking in an uncompromising clearness of thought to see that death is inescapable. Death must come! This is the truth! By admitting uncompromisingly that this truth is inescapable one will become immune to the suffering of death.

At this point Ando-san heaved a sigh of relief, as though he were somehow again successful in convincing himself of his delusion. During the social part of the interview with the Buddhist high priest Mrs. Ando remarked:



If I could be sure like you that the Absolute Being has consciousness and that such a Being knows me, then I could not feel secure in my present belief.

Then, in a more relaxed tone, she continued on the subject of death by reading an essay which she specially prepared for this interview:

In Buddhism there is what is called the Great Life (or the Absolute). Human life originated from this Absolute Being. But it must be remembered that this Absolute Being does not have color, temperature, shape. It is not subject to space and time; *and it does not have consciousness!*

The human life which originated from this Great Life completes its course after going through twelve stages. The first stage is called obscurity. In this stage human life is not contaminated by sins as yet. The second stage is called behavior. In the third stage the human life acquires consciousness. In the fourth stage human life begins to form the body consisting of cells. In the fifth stage the cells which originated in the fourth stage form various human organs, such as ears, eyes, etc. In the sixth stage human life has senses. In the seventh it has perceptions. In the eighth love originates in human life. This love (*eros*) is responsible for sufferings and sins, because we suffer when we are deprived of the object of our love, and we commit sins when we harm others because of our selfish love.

Our ultimate goal is to return to the Great Life. Buddhism calls this return *salvation*. There are two major divisions in Buddhism. However, they are different only because of their different views as to the way of salvation. One teaches that salvation is dependent upon our own works, and the other teaches that even though there are some people who can gain salvation by their works, the majority of people must depend upon the mercy of Amida for their salvation. This freedom from suffering and death can best be experienced in the "Nirvana" of perfect meditation in this life and in the "Karma" of new existence in the future life.

Thus ended the interview with the teachers of dead concepts on a subject that is alive and real—death! Imagine the thoughts that went through the mind of the writer and his interpreter as they walked home that night. It was late, and the wind was moaning through the treetops. Four dark figures were plodding through the graying January snow, carrying a corpse, stiff in death, which was to be treated with special last rites in a small side room of the temple. What does the departed soul of that corpse think about death? What do those four Japanese undertakers think about death? What do the people of Japan

actually think about death? Excerpts from a letter by Mrs. Ando written shortly after the interview may explain in a measure why Japanese who claim to be Buddhist do not know the concept of death. We quote in part:

Today I beg leave to make a few corrections in the explanations I made on Buddhism. The explanation was prepared in great haste on the very morning of the day of your visit, and it was based on my hazy memories.

I explained the other day that the twelve stages correspond to the stages from the conception to birth of human being. But it was erroneous. They correspond to the stages from conception to the death.

I also failed to explain about one of the twelve stages, *YU*. *YU* is the sentient world, the world of delusion, namely, this earthly world.

I explained that twelve stages corresponded to the stages of origination of original human being. But this is only my own opinion. So please do not tell to other people too much about it so that I may not be scolded by the specialists.

Also about love: Surely the love (*eros*) drives us to suffering, sins, old age, and death. But, once born on this earth, one must die even though the love (*eros*) is eradicated from one's heart. All that has beginning has end.

Buddhism is fine as a belief, but I am more interested in its doctrinal phases. Its theories may be termed the forerunner of science. Theories of modern science approve of them. Buddhist theories contain very detailed explanations on the things which the present-day science does not know how to explain despite its strenuous research. I believe, however, that it will not be in a very remote future that science will become able to approve of Buddhist theories on those things. . . .

And so the scholars continue to speculate and meditate. The people of Japan continue to die. Sorrowing loved ones continue to discover that the funeral fees of a Buddhist priest are not a delusion of the mind, but his chief source of income!

An eminent authority on things Japanese is John F. Embree. Not only did he prepare the war background studies on Japan for the Smithsonian Institute, but among other books he has written a detailed sociological study on village life in Japan for the Sociology Department of Chicago University. This particular book is called *Suye Mura*, after the name of the village he studied, on Kyushu. Here is a summary of the concepts of death held by the Japanese of that village:

When the coffin is ready, the body is undressed by close relatives behind an inverted screen. It is washed very thoroughly and dressed in a white pilgrim's outfit which has been prepared by a woman relative during the morning. A Buddhist rosary is put on its hand and a couple of coins in a bag hanging in front (for the ferryman in the next world). The deceased's fan is also enclosed, a fan being an indispensable part of a fully dressed individual. Often something the deceased liked very much is included. If the person died on "tombiki" (an unlucky day for funerals), a straw doll is made and put into the coffin with the corpse; otherwise it would call some living person to the grave soon after. Often the dressers talk to the corpse, explaining what they are doing. Bunches of burning incense are held by all participants because the corpse kept in the house has a distinct odor. This is often remarked on bluntly during its washing and dressing.

The funeral is the Buddhist priest's chief source of income especially because of the series of memorial services which are observed in connection with each funeral.

When a man dies, his soul does not immediately leave the house, but it hovers around until the funeral. After burial it starts its journey to heaven or hell, depending on its virtues in this life and on the prayers of its living relatives and on its particular Buddhist sect affiliation. The soul of an orthodox Shinto believer does not go to the paradise of Amida, but it hovers indefinitely about the village shrine.

Nirvana (the belief in "nehan," or loss of self and desires) is not known everywhere nor well understood where it is known among the people—likewise the belief in "Karma," or reincarnation. However, there are a few popular beliefs referred to as superstitions. For example, if one is unduly afraid of snakes, he was once a frog.

Most of the ideas of heaven and hell come from the priests' talks and are not very much thought about except by the older folks. Some of the funeral preparations are performed to facilitate the dead person's progress to heaven. . . . Most of these things are done as a matter of routine custom, and few people can explain the meaning of these customs. Folded white papers are worn by the female mourners in their hair and behind their ears, and they are thrown into the grave at the time of burial. Rice is also taken to be placed in the grave for food in the hereafter. The dish is covered with a paper in which is a hole through which the evil spirits may escape. In some places broken dishes are used to make the food look less attractive for any evil spirit who may rob it from the corpse.

Each "buraku" has certain burial customs peculiar to itself. The differences in customs are usually explained as being customs of different Buddhist sects, and there is no feeling that one method of burial is better or worse than another.<sup>3</sup>

That is what John F. Embree learned about death after living among the people of Suye Mura for a period of 16 months. The writer has not been in Japan that long, nor has his purpose been to make a scientific sociological study, but even so it is surprising what one learns incidentally through personal contacts. The following statements were made at various times this past year by some of the Japanese of our Bible classes. For good reasons they remain anonymous.

Mr. A said: "Two things I remember most at the funeral of my uncle. One was the Indian mumbling of the priests which nobody understands, and the other was the furtive glances of the priests toward the table where the incense offering (poetic for funeral expense money) was being received from the invited mourners. My family does not welcome the visit of Buddhist priests on the anniversary of our uncle's death, for when we give him the expected donation in an envelope, he has a clever way of feeling the contents thereof as he slips it into the inner folds of his robe, and his facial expression soon reveals his approval or disapproval of amount given. The Buddhist priest is never seen in the home except for funerals or anniversaries of deaths or when collecting temple fees. A Buddhist priest furnishes glitter, ritual, and a few pious thoughts on infinite mercy and happiness hereafter. The people furnish the sympathy to the bewildered bereaved."

Mr. B in private interview said one afternoon: "I pray to the spirit of my deceased father every day. I owe him much as debt for ingratitude I have shown him in this life. How can I be sure he hears me?"

Mr. C, upon invitation to be baptized, said: "I cannot become Christian, for that would mean a complete break with all of the past. I want very much to become Christian, but the sleeping souls of all my ancestors in peaceful Buddhist temples prevent me."

Mr. D, a hungry dormitory student, relishing a good American meal, said: "When there is a death in our family, we cannot eat meat for at least four weeks. We have no explanation for the existence of this custom in our family."

Mr. E, a bewildered university student, said that three years ago he lost his father, who was a doctor. This student is still com-

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<sup>3</sup> Embree, John F., *Suye Mura*, *passim*.

pelled to observe Buddhist rituals with his family members, but he expressed a view which is typical of Japanese young people: "We who are 'scientistically' educated have no view on death."

And so it is possible to continue by giving many more examples of Japanese ideas, closely or not so closely related to the Buddhist concept of death. The more one studies this subject, the more one is inclined to draw the following deduction: *In Japan the Buddhist concept of death consists of the original Buddhist theories, opinions of the various sect scholars, plus the wide range of vague beliefs and superstitions of the Japanese who to a greater or lesser degree have been influenced by Buddhism.* The Christian missionary in Japan who wishes to approach the Buddhist concept of death intelligently finds a concept that is as wide as it is broad. Obviously the Christian approach must not only be one of historical research and investigation, but above all an effectual evangelical presentation of the true concept of death, i. e., the Christian concept of death, centered in Christ's resurrection!

## HOMILETICS

### *A Series of Sermon Studies for the Church Year*

#### THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

MATT. 5:13-19

*The Text and the Day.* — The text is closely related to the Gospel lesson for this Sunday. The Good Samaritan proved himself to be the true salt of the earth and a true light of the world. The Epistle lesson, Gal. 3:15-22, especially the last two verses, emphasizes that no one can be saved by good works. We can never earn salvation even when we function as the world's salt and light. This text belongs to the Sermon on the Mount, which holds before us the high goal of perfection after which Christians should strive.

*Notes and Meaning.* — Nothing is more useful than light and salt. The sun shines in all lands. The salt is a preservative and a preventive in all lands. Christians as salt-bringers are to oppose the spiritual corruption of men and bring about their spiritual and moral soundness. Christians by their godly life, by worship and prayer, by example and attitude, are the means of preserving the world from decay and destruction. Salt is indispensable and irreplaceable. Light is indispensable and irreplaceable. "Ye" — not the Pharisees and scribes, not the political and economic, not the philosophers and educators, not even the modern religious liberals and modernists, but "ye," the redeemed children of God, the Christians, though ever so common people.

"Are," not "they ought to be" or "they will be" in some later age or in some future life, but they "ARE" — NOW — when there is so much confusion, fear, and perplexity in the world, when so many catastrophes threaten and problems vex the whole world.

"Earth — world," the terms are parallel and mean the whole world. Some say Jesus was interested only in individual souls; that He had no concern for the social order. Others say just the opposite. But this does not square with the text. Christians are the salt of the earth and the light of the world as they reflect the



light and glory of Christ's holy Gospel. The world cannot be changed unless the individuals are changed. Every Christian individual will set out to change "the earth" and "the world."

"If the salt have lost its savor" — "mooranthee" means to become insipid, so as to lack the proper preserving power. Here salt that has lost its strength and flavor. In the spiritual realm Christians may become unfaithful, mock God's Word, grieve the Holy Spirit. Christians sometimes become chameleons and adopt the color and flavor of the world. "Wherewith shall it be salted?" i.e., "How shall its efficacy be restored?" "It is henceforth good for nothing" — Christ warns His disciples against unbelief. Saltless salt is good for nothing. Christians who deny Christ by word and deed have no power for good. "Bleetheenai Exoo" — to cast out, i.e., indignant exclusion, "katapateisthai" — to be trodden under foot by men — in utter scorn and contempt.

"Ye are the light of the world" — The Christian Church is a light collectively and individually. Each Christian is a light, and in this world he is to glorify Christ. Christians who conceal their light destroy their own salvation. "Modios" — bushel, i.e., a Jewish grain measure, used also for many other purposes. "Lampsatoo" — a command — your light must shine. Every Christian has a light. This light must shine publicly.

Vv. 17-19. The entire Word of God will stand as long as heaven and earth remain and will always obligate all people. Christ came to fulfill, not to abolish, "katalusai," the Law. The Law will not pass away. In its present form it will last until the end of time. Those who break even the least of God's laws shall be punished.

*Preaching Pitfalls.* — Familiarity with the text may lead to a slipshod, superficial treatment on the part of the preacher and unwarranted disinterest on the part of the hearer. There is also the danger of becoming too technical and scientific in our interpretation of the nature, function, and purpose of salt and light. Scientific theories about light or the properties of salt will help but little in making plain to men what the will of the Lord is regarding the Christian life. The Savior applied the text in a natural, simple, illustrative manner. Cf. Mark 4:21-23; Luke 11:33-35.

*Preaching Emphasis.* — What we, the children of God, are expected to do. We can be the salt of the earth and the light of the world only when we proclaim Christ to be the Savior of the world and our very own Savior. The solemn duty of the believer in this world is to be the salt of the earth, the light of the world, and to keep and teach His holy Word. Christians should make their life count for God and for good.

*Problem and Goal.* — Christians are very often satisfied with a traditional, historic, and formal Christianity. Some think that when formal church services have been attended, a small contribution made, nothing more need be done. Such people remain spectators in the church and not participants. They are "balcony Christians," but "not a mighty army" in the arena. True Christian discipleship should manifest itself in power. The problem is to overcome lassitude, indifference, and the worldly spirit. Only the Word of God can change the heart. The goal is to make every Christian a powerful, believing, working Christian, living up to his calling and clinging to his Christ, who is the Salt and the Light of the world.

Illustrations: Abraham, Samuel, David, Paul, Luther, many Christian lay people in our churches; also pastors, teachers, and officers in the church and in church organizations.

*Outline:*

CHRIST'S CONCEPTION OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

I. The Christian in relation to society — as salt.

- A. Duty — to flavor and preserve. This power comes from Christ.
- B. Danger — to lose its savor. To receive a worldly impact instead of making a Christian impact. This happens when we grow indifferent to Christ.
- C. Doom — salt that is corrupt is good for nothing. It cannot fertilize nor purify. This is the doom of the Church if it fails to fulfill its function in this world. This happens when we fall away from Christ.



## II. The Christian mission to society — as light.

- A. Nature — "Ye are the light of the world." What an electric light is to a dark room, that a Christian is to the world.
- B. Importance — vv. 14 and 15. The Christian's life cannot be concealed, whether it is good or bad.
- C. Fulfillment — vv. 16-19. We reveal God clearly to the world, we witness to the truth, we spread the light when the Spirit of Christ lives in us.

EDWIN E. PIEFLOW

## FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

MATT. 12:9-21

*The Text and the Day.* — The Collect for this day calls upon God: 1) to keep us with His "perpetual mercy" (Latin, original, "Propitiatione"); 2) to keep us "from all things hurtful" (Epistle, Gal. 5:19-21; Gospel, Luke 17:18); and 3) to "lead us to all things profitable to our salvation" (Introit, "the courts of the Lord"; Gospel, Luke 17:17, 19; Epistle, Gal. 5:22-23; Gradual, "that the vow be performed"). Our text fits into this theme perfectly, showing us that through trust in Christ's name we shall have both mercy, or propitiation, and victory, or "deliverance from all things hurtful."

*Notes on the Meaning.* — V. 9. "Synagog," probably in Capernaum. (See *Life of Christ, Fabling*, 1st Ed., p. 245.) V. 10. "Xeeran" (cp. Mark 3:1, "exceerammeneen," aorist, lit., "had come to be withered"). According to legend (the Hebrew Gospel of the Nazarenes and Ebionites), he was a stone mason who had been maimed by an accident and who asked Jesus to restore the use of his working hand ("the right hand," Luke 6:6) that he might not have to beg. (Farrar I, 439.)

Vv. 10-13. Comparing the parallel passages (Mark 3:1-10; Luke 6:6-12), one gets the following harmony of events: 1) The Pharisees asked Jesus, Matt. 12:10b; 2) Jesus countered with Mark 3:3-5 ("When He looked . . . with anger," Greek, "orgee,"

according to Thayer, not like "thumos," a passionate outburst, but a kind of settled and composed indignation), Luke 6:9; Matt. 12:11-13.

V. 11. The Rabbis held it to be permissible to pull out a sheep from a pit if it was in danger, and in less extreme cases planks could be put in and food furnished. But Jesus laid down the principle that it never was contrary to God's Sabbath Law to do that which is humane or necessary for the well-being of God's creatures, and especially of man (v. 12).

V. 14. "They took counsel" with the Herodians (Mark 3:6), a Jewish political party attached to the Herodian family; probably to place Jesus into political jeopardy. V. 16. It was not His aim to set Himself up as a miraclemonger. Vv. 17-21. A free quotation by God's Spirit of the Hebrew text in Is. 42:1 ff. V. 18. "He shall show judgment," namely, God's declaration of pardon (2 Cor. 5:19-20) "to the Gentiles." V. 20. "Till He send" — an abbreviation and paraphrase of Is. 42:3-4, the meaning according to Lange, that "the judgment is to be transferred into victory of truth, or into absolute victory." V. 21. "In His name" (Greek dative, "too onomati") according to Meyer, "The Gentiles will trust on the ground of what His name as Messiah implies."

*Preaching Pitfalls.* — An extended digression into the nature of the disease that was involved or into the subject of Jewish Sabbath Day practices would surely take the hearer too far afield.

*Problem and Goal.* — The preacher will strive: 1) to arouse in his hearers a deep sense of guilt over their mistrust of God's love and over their uncharitable deeds toward one another; and 2) to remove this burden of guilt through Christ's merciful propitiation for sin; and 3) by such removal of guilt he will incite them to trust God and to live in love with one another.

*Illustrations.* — 1. The Gospel (Luke 17:11-17), God's mercy for ten, and the gratitude of only one. 2. For a modern example of healing and gratitude, see the *Lutheran Witness*, June 13, 1950, p. 2, under the caption "Made whole by Faith." 3. The Epistle shows us how we might give forth the evidence of a victorious life (Gal. 5:22-24). 4. Examples of "bruised reeds" that were healed are: 2 Sam. 12:13-14; John 8:3-11; Luke 15:20-24; 18:13-14;

23, 43. 5. The uncharitable application of the rules of the Rabbis finds its parallel today in an uncharitable application of synodical and congregational rules in dealing with one another. 6. 1 Cor. 13.

*Outline:*

"IN HIS NAME SHALL THE GENTILES TRUST"

I. For Mercy.

- A. The Messiah promised in Scripture is to be a Messenger of mercy, who will help in affliction and forgive sin (vv. 17-21; Is. 42:3-7).
- B. Jesus showed Himself to be that Messenger when He risked danger and suffered death in order to bring such mercy to all who come to Him (vv. 12-13; John 8: 3-11; 3:14-17).
- C. Let us, therefore, trust Him for such mercy and, moved by His love, be merciful also toward one another.

II. For Victory.

- A. The Scripture predicted that the Messiah would quietly but surely attain the victory (vv. 18, 20; Is. 42:2, 4).
- B. Jesus showed Himself to be this Victor, or Messiah, when He healed all who came to Him (vv. 13, 15) and when He saved the world from sin (2 Cor. 5:19-20; Rom. 4:25).
- C. No matter how great our affliction or sin, through trust in Christ we, too, shall achieve the victory (Rom. 8: 28, 35; Rom. 7:24-25; 1 Cor. 15:57).
- D. We ought, therefore, to produce the fruits of our faith by living a confident, a thankful, and a victorious life of love (Epistle; Gospel; 1 Cor. 13; and 1 Cor. 15:58).

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THEODORE F. NICKEL

FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

JOHN 14:7-11

*The Text and the Day.*— Theme and text point to the believer's imperfect knowledge of his Savior and to the need for growth in his knowledge of Christ. There cannot be such growth without the

help and mercy of God, for which we pray in the Introit. The Collect, which pleads with God to preserve and defend the Church by His help and goodness, would also include the prayer for His aid toward the growth of the Church in the all-important knowledge of Jesus. And finally the trumpet call of the Gospel, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God!" would leave no doubt about the paramount importance of growing in the knowledge of Him who alone is the Way that leads to this kingdom.

*Notes on Meaning.* — V. 7. "If ye had known Me," i. e., if you had come to know Me fully. The disciples did know Jesus, but their knowledge of Him was imperfect. At this point they had, for instance, not yet come to know the important fact of His oneness with the Father, i. e., that Jesus is in the Father and the Father in Jesus, that they are one, and that knowing Jesus or seeing Jesus was tantamount to knowing and seeing the Father. Thus Christ is justified in saying by means of the unreal condition (condition contrary to fact) at the beginning of this verse that His disciples did not really know Him yet. (See I A of the outline.)

"And from henceforth ye know Him and have seen Him." But from now on, i. e., in the period beginning with Christ's acts and teachings on this night and culminating in the astounding events of the next few days, they will have a fuller knowledge of Jesus than they ever had before, and they will, therefore, also have a fuller knowledge of the Father, who is in Christ and with whom Christ is one. Even more perfect will be their knowledge of Jesus and, therefore, of the Father who dwelleth in Him when at the end of this eventful period Christ will have sent them the Comforter to testify of Him (John 15:26). And as they grow to see Christ more clearly in this eventful period (which has already begun), they also learn to see the Father in Him. — "And have seen Him," i. e., henceforth. They have seen the Father for a long time; they have seen Him every time they saw Christ, but they have not yet realized that. Henceforth, however, when their knowledge of Christ will become fuller and greater, they will become conscious of the fact that they have seen the Father often, that they have seen Him whenever they saw their Master. (See III C.)

V. 8. Philip has not yet understood that by seeing Christ he sees the Father; he is just like the rest of the disciples in this respect.

Christ's statement about seeing the Father has only produced in him the desire to see an appearance of the Father, of course, an appearance of the Father completely apart from Christ, i.e., such as Moses had seen (Ex. 24:9-11). That, he says, would satisfy him and the other disciples. How far Philip was yet from a full knowledge of Jesus! None of the disciples corrects Philip. They must have agreed with his request. (See I B.)

V. 9. There is deep sorrow and disappointment in these words of Christ. How little must they have been concerned about knowing Him more fully, for how else could their ignorance be explained after His long and intimate association with them? (See II A.) — Yet this verse also shows Christ's love and concern for this disciple. His manner of correcting Philip is loving and gentle, for He does not aim to antagonize but rather to attract and win. Note how strong a bond Jesus creates between Himself and Philip by merely calling him by his name. (See III A.)

V. 10. "I speak not of Myself," i.e., the Father who is present in Me speaks them to you. Since the disciples often heard Christ speak words which came from the Father and since even unbelievers were prompted to say when they had heard Jesus: "Never man spake like this Man" (John 7:46), subdivision II B points out how disappointing it must have been to Jesus that His disciples did not recognize His oneness with the Father from the words which the Father spoke through Him. — Do not read: "*but* the Father that dwelleth in Me," etc.; rather read: "*and* (or *moreover*) the Father that dwelleth in Me doeth the works." Note that these works are not done by the Father but by "the Father as abiding in Jesus, by virtue of the oneness of the Father and the Son" (Lenski). If nothing else, then certainly the miracles of Jesus should have convinced the disciples long ago that the Father was present in their Master. (See II C.)

V. 11. "Believe." Note the plural; the Lord is speaking to all His disciples now. This is not a command, but an exhortation, a plea of the Savior, who is full of anxiety about their spiritual welfare. Jesus first appeals to them to believe on the strength of His own testimony that He is in the Father and the Father is in Him. "*Ei de mee*," or else, and if not, i.e., if you should find it difficult to believe My words, if you should still have

doubts and misgivings. In that case "believe Me because of the works themselves." His works are the ultimate evidence. They exhibit beyond a doubt that Jesus is in the Father and the Father in Him. Lenski: "Always at the ultimate point the works are decisive. With words one may argue, with deeds only one thing is left—to see what they are and believe, or to shut the eyes and disbelieve." (See III B.)

*Preaching Pitfalls.*—The central message of the Gospel can be brought into the sermon at many points, but it will be absolutely necessary for the proper development of subdivision III C.

*Problem and Goal.*—The problem the preacher will face if he develops his sermon according to the outline suggested below is the fact that Christians are too often satisfied with a rather superficial and incomplete knowledge of their Savior. Knowing merely the most essential points about their Redeemer is sufficient for them.

The goal of the sermon is to show that such an attitude is both disappointing to the Savior and dangerous to the believer and that our Lord is anxious to help us to know Him better and better. Relying on the power of God's Word, the preacher will, therefore, aim to fill his hearers with an earnest desire and with a strong determination to strive to grow in the knowledge of their Savior and to continue this quest for a deeper and fuller understanding of Christ as long as life will last.

*Outline:*

AND YET HAST THOU NOT KNOWN ME?

- I. The disciples do not yet fully know their Master.
  - A. What they do not yet know (v. 7a).
  - B. Philip, an example of their ignorance (v. 8).
- II. What a disappointment to Jesus for
  - A. Had He not associated with them long and intimately to give them an opportunity to know Him? (V. 9a.)
  - B. Had they not often heard Him teach with words that came from the Father? (V. 10b.)
  - C. Had they not seen the hand of the Father in the miracles He worked? (V. 10c.)



III. Yet His love and concern for the disciples who have disappointed Him remain undiminished.

A. How gently and lovingly He corrects Philip! (V.9.)

B. With what deep concern for their welfare He pleads with His disciples: "Believe Me!" (V. 11.)

C. He comforts them that the last and crowning events in His work of redemption and finally the coming of the Holy Spirit will aid them toward a more perfect knowledge of Himself (v. 7b).

A. R. RIEP

### SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

MATT. 9:14-17

*The Text and the Day.*—The Introit for the Day utters the plaintive cry: "Be merciful unto me, O Lord." With the Collect we plead for the grace of God that we might continually be given to all good works. The Epistle records the Apostolic prayer for spiritual strength motivated by faith in Christ and the knowledge of His love. By raising the young man at the gate of Nain, according to the Gospel, Christ demonstrates His compassion and the fact that He is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think. In our text Jesus insists that we are free from "the yoke of bondage" and that we should enjoy the liberty where-with He has made us free.

*Notes on Meaning.*—V. 14. "Then came to Him the disciples of John." Note the context: the conversion and call of Levi, Matthew; the "great feast in his own house." Matt. 9:9-11; Mark 2:14-15; Luke 5:27-29. Not to conform to outworn customs and traditions, socially to fellowship and feast with the unorthodox, to expose themselves to the stigma of creating a scandal, was, indeed, an act of heroic courage on the part of Jesus and His disciples. "Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft, but Thy disciples fast not?" "We and the Pharisees!" A strange alliance. John was languishing in Herod's prison at Machaerus. Not all of his disciples had become followers of Jesus. Here was an opportunity the Pharisees grasped to pit John's disciples against Jesus.

Fasting and bodily preparation is no sin. But by custom and

man-made traditions, days of fasting had been multiplied from once a year, Lev. 23:27, to twice a week, Luke 18:12. These and other self-imposed burdens were considered meritorious acts to propitiate the Deity and to curry divine favor. Asceticism fostered in Christendom, monasticism, work-righteousness, holy-year pilgrimages, Sabbath observance, sectarian "touch not!" and the like, come under the classification of "fasting."

V. 15. The relation between Jesus and His disciples, between Christ and His Church, is that of the Bridegroom and the children of the bridechamber. The wedding festivities on the part of the bridegroom and the bridal party continued for a week or two. In the New Testament era the joyous life of Christians is portrayed as that of a wedding feast. We are to rejoice in our Savior. The joy of the Church Triumphant, Rev. 19:7; 21:2 is to be reflected in the hearts and lives of the believers in the Church Militant, Is. 61:10; Zech. 9:9; John 3:29; 1 Thess. 5:16; Phil. 4:4. Even the sorrow which His disciples were to experience "when the Bridegroom shall be taken from them" would "be turned into joy," John 16:20-22.

V. 16. There is neither rhyme nor reason to patch an old garment with a piece of new, unfulled cloth. At the first shower the raw material of the patch as woven in that age would shrink and play havoc with the garment.

V. 17. Bottles in the days of Jesus were made of goatskins. Old skins were already stretched to the breaking point. Put new, unfermented wine in them, and the results would be disastrous both to the bottles and to the wine.

In other words, don't hold to a religion of ceremonies, self-righteousness, traditions, or of any human invention, and attempt to patch it up with the new cloth woven from the righteousness of Christ. We dare not retain the old bottles, the Ceremonial Law, self-chosen customs and commandments of men, and make ourselves guilty of the incongruity of merely adding the Gospel of Christ. The old garments and the old bottles must be cast away. 2 Cor. 5:17; Matt. 15:3, 9; Col. 2:8, 16-17, 20-23; Gal. 5:1.

*Preaching Pitfalls.*—Beware of iconoclasm. The old is not always bad, nor the new always good. "The old paths," "the good way," Jer. 6:16. Jesus came not to destroy. Matt. 5:17; Luke 5:39.

*Problem and Goal.* — Brush away the cobwebs of traditions, the fungus of human customs and practices that taint the doctrines of Holy Writ, especially every vestige of work-righteousness. The children of the bridechamber are to lead a fruitful life of rejoicing.

*Illustrations.* — The Judaizers in the Apostolic age urged Christian congregations to patch the Gospel onto the old garment of Judaism. Narrow provincialism — world-wide mission obligations. Passively accepting a few agreeable Christian truths, but clinging to the old sinful manner of life. Sunday religion — weekday worldliness. Is. 1:11; Hosea 6:6.

*Outline:*

"Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you." 1 Pet. 3:15. Learn of Jesus. He was asked:

"WHY DO THY DISCIPLES FAST NOT?"

- I. What provoked the question?
  - A. The great feast in Matthew's house.
  - B. The offense taken, v. 14.
- II. Jesus' answer to the question.
  - A. The custom of joyous marriage festivities in the days of Jesus.
  - B. The joyous relation between Christ and His Church, v. 15.
- III. The propriety of this answer.
  - A. The parable of the new patch on the old garment, v. 16.
  - B. The parable of the new wine and the old bottles, v. 17.

H. W. BARTELS

## BRIEF STUDIES

### THE ISSUE INVOLVED IN THE LUTHERAN REJECTION OF CONSUBSTANTIATION

It is well known that the Lutherans vigorously deny the charge preferred against them by the Reformed, that in the doctrine of the Lord's Supper they teach a sort of modified Romanism, called consubstantiation. But less known perhaps is the issue involved in the Lutheran repudiation of consubstantiation and the weighty significance that attaches to the issue.

Lutherans of course have never objected to the term "consubstantiation" *per se*, though they have not regarded it as adequate to express what more fittingly they designate by *Real Presence*. From medieval scholasticism Lutheran dogmaticians have borrowed many theological terms which, while not *per se* adequate, were used by them to set forth thoughts and doctrines clearly taught in Scripture. Thus the term *aseitas*, describing God's being of Himself and independent of anyone or anything outside Himself, was employed to stress the Scriptural truth that God from all eternity is forever of and in Himself, there being no creative cause outside the divine, eternal Creative Cause. The term is subject to debate, but not the Scripture doctrine which it declares. Even the expression *trinitas* did not escape criticism, and none other than Luther remarked that it does not "sound good" (*koestlich lauten*; cf. Pieper, *Christl. Dogm.*, I, 495). Nevertheless, both Luther and the Lutheran dogmaticians used *trinitas* no less than the far more inadequate term *Dreifaltigkeit*. So also the Lutheran dogmaticians did not object to the term "consubstantiation," provided it was understood in the sense of Real Presence. The question was therefore not one of terminology, but of theology.

The Reformed themselves have sensed this. Charles Hodge, for example, sums up the matter very nicely in his *Systematic Theology*. He writes: "This presence of the body and blood of Christ in, with, and under the bread and wine has been generally expressed by non-Lutherans by the word consubstantiation, as distinguished from the Romish doctrine of transubstantiation. The propriety of this word to express the doctrine of Luther is admitted by Philippi, if it be understood to mean, what in fact is meant by it when used by the Reformed (*sic?*), '*das reale Zusammensein beider Substanzen*,' i. e., the real coexistence of the two substances, the earthly and the heavenly. But Lutherans generally object to the word, because it is often used to express the

idea of the mixing [of the] two substances so as to form a third, or the local inclusion of the one substance by the other." (Vol. III, 672.)

Hodge obviously is wrong when he says that by the term "consubstantiation" there was usually understood no more than the "real co-existence of the two substances." But he is right in stating that the Lutherans did not object so much to the term as rather to the implication of the term, namely, that in the Holy Supper the earthly and the heavenly elements, according to Lutheran doctrine, are mingled into a new substance, or that there is a local inclusion of Christ's body in the consecrated bread (impanation).

The attitude of the Lutherans to the term "consubstantiation" is well shown in Meusel's *Kirchliches Handlexikon*: "It would not be wrong *per se* to call the doctrine of the Lutheran Church regarding the presence of the body and blood of Christ and their connection with the earthly elements of the bread and wine a consubstantiation over against the Romish transubstantiation, as also Philippi (*Kirchl. Glaubensl.*, Bd. V, 2, S. 356) acknowledges.

"In fact, it [the Real Presence] has indeed often been so called; for while the Romish Church lets the substance of the bread and wine pass into and become transformed into the substance of the body and blood of Christ, the Lutheran Church teaches that the substance of the earthly elements remains, and there is united with it the substance of the body and blood of Christ in a mysterious, unique manner.

"Nevertheless, our older Lutheran dogmatists deny that they affirmed a consubstantiation in the Lord's Supper, namely, in the sense in which the Reformed understood this expression and used it in criticism of the Lutheran conception of the doctrine. They understood by it either the physical commingling of two substances into a third (*in unam massam physicam coalitio*) or a local inclusion of the one in the other (cf. *impanatio*).

"The Lutheran Church rejects both, when it teaches a real presence of the body and blood of Christ and then a distribution 'in, with, and under the bread and wine.' According to it [the Lutheran Church], the union of the heavenly and earthly matter in the Lord's Supper is like the union of the Holy Spirit with the water of Baptism, or like the relation of the angel to a flame of fire, or that of the Holy Ghost to a dove. 'I would not know how to call it' (Luther) . . . John Gerhard (*Loci Theol.*, edid. Preuss, Vol. V, p. 66): 'We declare not an absence (*apousian*), not an inclusion (*enousian*), not a mingling (*synousian*), not a transubstantiation (*metousian*), but a presence (*parousian*) of the body and blood of Christ in the Lord's Supper.'"

A comprehensive study of the history of the controversy on the Real Presence seems to show that originally the Reformed, when charging the Lutherans with teaching consubstantiation, accused them, directly or by implication, that they were advocating either a "commixture of substances so as to form a third" or a local inclusion of Christ's body in the consecrated host.

Later Reformed writers took notice of the rejection of the term "consubstantiation" by the Lutherans and admitted that they taught neither a commingling of substances nor an impanation. But they then applied the term "consubstantiation" to the Lutheran doctrine of the Real Presence, and so today Reformed and some Lutheran writers often ascribe to Lutheranism the teaching of consubstantiation, this of course in the sense of the "in, with, and under."

The majority of Lutherans, however, do not desire to have their doctrine of the Real Presence represented as consubstantiation, and so they reject the term since historically it has a connotation that identifies it in a general way with Romanism. That is the issue involved in the Lutheran controversy with the Reformed: the Lutheran *realis praesentia* does not mean a mingling of the body with the bread and of the wine with the blood, just as little as it means a conversion of the bread into the body and of the wine into the blood of Christ. In other words, the Lutheran doctrine of the Real Presence is not merely a modification of the Roman Catholic transubstantiation, but it is a renunciation of that doctrine *in toto*, just as it is a total renunciation of Calvinistic symbolism in the Eucharist. Viewed in this way, the repudiation of consubstantiation is a shibboleth of true Lutheranism so far as the Eucharist is concerned.

In his *Biblical Dogmatics* Prof. A. G. Voigt puts the matter very perspicuously when he writes: "In the Lord's Supper there is an earthly material, bread and wine, and a celestial material, the body and blood of Christ. The doctrine of transubstantiation identifies these. That of consubstantiation, or impanation, confuses and mingles them. The symbolic doctrine [Calvinism] separates them. The Lutheran doctrine of the real presence unites them. The Lutheran Church holds to a sacramental union, unique in its nature, of the terrestrial and the celestial, but only in the sacramental act of eating and drinking" (p. 214 f.).

Perhaps no one has contributed more toward the rejection of consubstantiation in the Lutheran Church in America than Charles Porterfield Krauth, who, in his great polemical work *The Conservative Reformation and Its Theology*, has treated the subject at great length and with convincing clarity and force. The Lutheran student of dogma will



do well to study his enlightening chapters on the subject, with grateful recognition of the profound theological learning which was put into this remarkable study.

The value of proper theological terms is apparent. Systematic theology cannot do without them. Nevertheless, there lurks a danger in the very theological terminology which often proves itself so very serviceable. It is subject not only to misunderstanding, but also to abuse. Terms may be used to label a doctrine, or the teacher of a doctrine, in such a way that it is impossible to escape the charge of heresy, even if the doctrine or the teacher of a doctrine is far from heretical. If, for example, a Lutheran is branded a consubstantiationist for teaching the Real Presence, or if he is called a liberal for departing from a tradition, or if he is denominated a unionist for doing something which is interpreted as unionism, even though the Christian truth is confessed, then theological terms may become terrific liabilities. Consubstantiation has proved itself a liability to Lutheranism many a time. It is also for this reason that Lutherans should disavow it.

In many respects Article VII of the Formula of Concord is perhaps the grandest of all the twelve articles of that great historical and doctrinal document. One of its undeniable virtues is the fact that it reduces theological terminology to a minimum, teaching the profoundest truths in simple, lucid language. The clearest statement of the Real Presence, directed against both the Reformed and the Romanist errors, is no doubt found toward the close of the Seventh Article. In the homely, precious words with which the Epitome closes its presentation of the doctrine of the Lord's Supper there is a grandeur of expression and an inherent persuasiveness which is far more effective than all scholastic parlance that ever has been deposited in a systematic disquisition. We refer to the stirring, appealing words:

"We maintain and believe, according to the simple words of the testament of Christ, the true, yet supernatural eating of the body of Christ, as also the drinking of His blood, which human senses and reason do not comprehend, but as in all other articles of faith our reason is brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, and this mystery is not apprehended otherwise than by faith alone and revealed in the Word alone" (Art. VII, Epit., 42).

In this unpretentious paragraph there is summarized the whole issue involved in the controversy between the Lutherans and the Reformed on the Real Presence, and this in language which does not only do justice to the thesis, but also does away with the antithesis.

J. T. MUELLER

## 'Αλλ' IN MATTHEW 20:23 AND MARK 10:40

Almost all interpretations and translations of Matthew 20:23 and Mark 10:40 take ἄλλ' as the adversative conjunction meaning "but" and as introducing an independent clause — which isn't there. Mark 10:40 (A. V.): "But to sit on My right hand and on My left is not Mine to give; but *it shall be given to them* for whom it is prepared"; the italics are those of the Authorized Version. The text is broken in two by a semicolon, which also is not there and which makes the preceding statement more absolute than it was intended to be: Jesus cannot give the places of honor to anyone. If we omit everything which the translation adds, we get the opposite meaning: Jesus does assign the places of honor. The italics should have given us scruples long ago; however unanimous commentators and translators have been in their support of the italicized words.

Can we legitimately add the words "it shall be given to them"? To answer that question, I have with the help of Hatch and Redpath's concordance checked each of the 556 cases of ἄλλά in Rahlfs' Septuagint and with Moulton and Geden's concordance each of the 636 cases in the New Testament. There are in the Old Testament 110 instances and in the New Testament 114 instances where ἄλλά, meaning "but," "however," introduces only words or phrases. But that which has to be supplied to complete the meaning in these 224 instances is regularly taken from the rest of the sentence. I could find no case where the supplementary idea is so freely added from the imagination as has been done in Matt. 20:23 and Mark 10:40; the common assumption that the Father assigns the places of honor ought to be traceable to some point in the context, but at least in Mark's words the Father is not mentioned. In many of the ἄλλά passages some form of εἰμί has to be supplied (Is. 7:8; 5:25; 9:11, 16, 20; 10:4; 53:3; 63:16; Wisdom 16:12; Mark 13:7; Luke 5:38; 21:9; Rom. 5:15; 7:13; 9:16, 32; 11:11; 14:20; 15:3, 21; 1 Cor. 2:9; 8:7; 15:39, 40, 46; 2 Cor. 3:5; 5:12; 7:5; 8:13, 19; Heb. 10:3), but adding ἔστιν to the words in Matthew and Mark does not solve their problem. In Mark 14:36 we may supply γενήσεται, and in Mark 6:9 we may supply πορεύεσθαι and admit an anacoluthon, but the meaning of these passages is simple, and there is an intrinsic urgency to supplement them in these specific ways; that is not true of Matthew 20:23 and Mark 10:40. The best defense of the commonly accepted interpretation of these passages, I believe, would be based on John 7:16 (all but the first three words are repeated in 14:24): ἡ ἐμὴ διδασχὴ οὐκ ἔστιν ἐμὴ ἀλλὰ τοῦ πέμψαντός με. However, if you will compare this with the words of Mark:

τὸ καθίσαι . . . οὐκ ἔστιν ἐμὸν δοῦναι ἀλλ' οἷς ἡτοίμασται, you will find three vital differences: (1) In John 7:16 there is a sharp contrast between the Son and the Father, which quickly establishes the meaning of ἀλλά. Mark 10:40 presents no such contrast but states that while Jesus has much to give, there is a limitation or an exception; it is this context which determines the meaning of ἀλλά. (2) If the passage in Mark were really parallel to that of John, there ought to be a τοῦτων before οἷς (Robertson's *Grammar*, p. 721). But τοῦτων, far from filling the gap, is hardly a better solution than setting ἐμὸν directly parallel to οἷς as a possessive; both solutions, unless you suppress δοῦναι, really mean that those for whom the places of honor are prepared have the power to assign them; Jesus did not mean to say that. (3) The passage in Mark is distinguished by δοῦναι, which, only slightly interrupted by the intervening ἀλλ', forms a phrase with (τούτοις) οἷς. There is a remarkable illustration of such a tie between the words before and after ἀλλά in 1 Chronicles 15:2: Οὐκ ἔστιν ἄρα τὴν κιβωτὸν τοῦ θεοῦ ἀλλ' ἢ τοὺς Λευίτας. Here we have an infinitive-with-the-accusative construction, but the infinitive is before the ἀλλά and the accusative is after it. The bond is very much like that between δοῦναι and its indirect object οἷς; this bond cannot be broken in order to form two independent clauses. (It is interesting to note how the subjective bias can enter into a fine text like Nestle's: While there is no comma before ἀλλά in John 7:16, there is a comma before it in Matthew 20:23 and in Mark 10:40; these texts should be read without the comma.)

Robertson (*Grammar*, p. 1187) says, "Both Winer and W. F. Moulton (W.-M., p. 566) felt certain that ἀλλά never equals εἰ μή." But Liddell and Scott point out that ἀλλά with the meaning "except" occurs even in Homer's *Odyssey*. We may quote another instance from Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* (Loeb edition, pp. 604—6): ἡδέα δ' οὐκ ἔστιν ἀλλ' ἢ τούτοις καὶ οὕτω διακειμένοις, pleasures are "only pleasant to these particular persons who are in a condition to think them so."

The evidence for ἀλλά="except" would be considerably reduced if ἀλλά were different from ἀλλ' ἢ. But while ἀλλ' ἢ much more frequently than ἀλλά means "except," it does not seem possible to distinguish the two. What P. Bachmann (Zahn's commentary on 2 Cor. 1:13) says, "H verbindet sich vielmehr nach altem und allgemeinem Sprachgebrauch mit der Konjunktion ἀλλά und schliesst sich an das οὐκ ἄλλα an in dem Sinne: nichts anderes als," could also be said of ἀλλά without ἢ. 'Αλλ' ἢ is the common rendering of

*kī 'im*, and the LXX translators were happy to find an idiomatic equivalent of *'im* in ἢ as they had found one for *kī 'im* in ἅλλ'. 'Ἄλλ' ἢ is also used to translate just *kī*, "but" (Deut. 20:17), and it means "but" in the LXX more often than "except." Liddell and Scott cite classical cases where ἅλλά means ἢ. 'Ἀλλά means "except" (Num. 35:33) and is used to translate *raq*, "only" (Num. 20:19; Josh. 11:22; 13:6). We must take ἅλλ' ἢ simply as a strengthened form of ἅλλά.

Since the Hebrew *kī 'im* and the Aramaic *'illā* (Blass-Debrunner, § 448:8) have two meanings, "but" and "except," it would be an inherited habit for a New Testament writer to use ἅλλά in any one of its two meanings "but" and "except." To be most thoroughly convinced that ἅλλ' in Matt. 20:23 and Mark 10:40 means "except," we need to read each of the forty instances where ἅλλά means "except" first in the Hebrew and then in the Greek: 'Ἀλλά—Num. 35:33; Job 40:8 (A. V.); Dan. 6:13 (Theodotion adds ἢ). 'Ἄλλ' ἢ—Gen. 21:26, *bilti*; 28:17, *kī 'im*; 47:18, *bilti 'im*; Ex. 33:16, *b'lo*; Lev. 21:2; Num. 23:13, *ephes*; Deut. 4:12, *zūlātibī*; 10:12; Josh. 14:4; Judg. 7:14; 1 Kings 21:7; 2 Kings 12:3; 3 Kings 22:31; 4 Kings 13:7; 1 Chron. 15:2; 2 Chron. 18:30; 21:17; Esther 5:12; 1 Macc. 9:6; 10:38; Ps. 132:1; Sirach 22:14; Micah 6:8; Mal. 2:15; Is. 42:19 (bis); 66:2; Jer. 51:14; Dan. 2:11 (Theodotion), *lābēn*; 6:8; 10:21. "Οτι ἅλλ' ἢ—1 Kings 30:17; 4 Kings 4:2; 5:15; Eccl. 5:10. 'Ἄλλ' ἢ οὐ—2 Kings 19:29. 'Ἀλλά πλην—Joshua 11:22, *raq*.

Moulton-Milligan cite several cases from papyri (dated 240 B. C., 200 B. C., and 84 A. D.) where ἅλλ' ἢ means "except." We quote from them only one case (dated 92 B. C.) which shows that ἅλλά without ἢ means "except": μὴ ἐξέστω Φιλίσκωι γυναῖκα ἄλλην ἐπαγαγέσθαι ἅλλὰ 'Απολλωνίαν, "any other wife but A." There is an example of this meaning of ἅλλά in I Clement (dated 90–100 A. D.) LI:5: οὐ δι' ἄλλην τινὰ αἰτίαν ἐβυθίσθησαν εἰς θάλασσαν ἐρυνθρὰν καὶ ἀπώλοντο, ἅλλὰ διὰ τὸ σκληρυνθῆναι αὐτῶν τὰς ἀσυνέτους καρδίας, "they were sunk in the Red Sea, and perished for no other cause than that their foolish hearts were hardened." And another in the Didache (from the first and second century, A. D.) IX:5: μηδεὶς δὲ φαγέτω μηδὲ πῖέτω ἀπὸ τῆς εὐχαριστίας ὑμῶν, ἅλλ' οἱ βαπτισθέντες εἰς ὄνομα κυρίου, "but let none eat or drink of your Eucharist except those who have been baptized in the Lord's name."

The common New Testament term for "except" is εἰ μὴ (e. g., Luke 4:26-27). But ἅλλ' ἢ may have the same meaning (Blass-Debrunner, § 448:8), as we see from 2 Cor. 1:13: οὐ γὰρ ἄλλα γράφομεν ὑμῖν ἅλλ' ἢ ἃ ἀναγινώσκετε, "for we write to you only what you read."

(Meyer, Zahn, and Blass-DeBrunner, § 448:8, say that we have a similar case in Luke 12:51. But there we have εἰρήνην sharply contrasted with διαμερισμόν, and usage — Gen. 18:15; 19:2; 42:12; Num. 13:30; Josh. 24:21; Judg. 15:13; 1 Kings 8:19; 10:19; 12:12; 17:43; 2 Kings 16:18; 24:24; 3 Kings 3:22, 23; 4 Kings 20:10; Tobit 10:9; Luke 1:60; 13:3, 5; 16:30; John 7:12; 9:9; Acts 16:37; Rom. 3:27 — shows that the meaning is "No, but.")

Coming home to Mark, we find ἄλλ' with the meaning "except" and parallel to ἔὰν μὴ in Mark 4:22: οὐ γὰρ ἐστὶν τι κρυπτόν, ἔὰν μὴ ἵνα φανερωθῇ· οὐδὲ ἐγένετο ἀπόκρυφον, ἄλλ' ἵνα ἔλθῃ εἰς φανερόν, "nothing is secret except for the purpose that it may be made known; nothing is hidden except that it may be brought to light." In Mark 9:8 Nestle, following  $\aleph$  BDN 36, 61 Latt. Memph., adopts εἰ μὴ, while the *Expositor's Greek Testament*, following C $\aleph$ Thm; Th, retains ἀλλά and comments, "ἀλλά=εἰ μὴ after a negative." Allen in the ICC also accepts the reading ἀλλά. It is significant that ἀλλά and εἰ μὴ are so easily interchangeable in Mark. (We have similar parallel readings in Judg. 7:14, where A has ἄλλ' ἢ and B has εἰ μὴ, and in Dan. 2:11, where the LXX has εἰ μήτι and Theodotion, has ἄλλ' ἢ, all with the meaning "except.")

James Kleist (*The Gospel of Saint Mark*, Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1936, p. 218) says: "After ἄλλ' οἷς ἡτοίμασται supply τὸ ἐμὲ δοῦναι. . . . Our Lord assigns special places to none for carnal considerations, but always in due conformity with the will of the Father; *He* does the actual assigning." Kleist states the meaning of the verse correctly, but he tries to rescue the *sed* of the Vulgate by supplying three Greek words. Nothing, however, needs to be supplied. According to Greek usage οὐκ . . . ἀλλά in Matt. 20:23 and Mark 10:40 means "non . . . nisi," "not . . . except," or "only." J. H. Moulton (*A Grammar of New Testament Greek*, I, p. 241; II, p. 468) was on the right track, but he stopped short of the goal. It seems to have passed unnoticed that in its seventh edition Blass-Debrunner, § 448:8, says that ἀλλά=εἰ μὴ in Matthew 20:23. *The Bible Commentary* (N.Y.: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1899) says on Matthew 20:23: "*it shall be given*. These words are not in the original, and this clause may be more literally translated 'is not mine to give, except to those,' &c. Christ is the giver, not, however, by way of favour to any one who asks, but according to the eternal purpose of the Father." And on Mark 10:40: "*but it shall be given to them*. Or, omitting these words, 'save to them for whom it is prepared.'"

James and John came to Jesus to ask Him, "Let one of us sit at Your right and the other at Your left in Your glory" (Mark 10:37). Had Jesus answered, "I have no right to give you that," we would have to assume He was referring to His humiliation (Lenski), which would be little short of an evasion after the two disciples had said, "in your glory." The Authorized Version "seems to make our Lord repudiate the right to assign to each of His people his place in the kingdom of glory; a thing which He nowhere else does, but rather the contrary. It is true that He says their place is 'prepared for them by His Father.' But that is true of their admission to heaven at all; and yet from His great white throne Jesus will Himself adjudicate the kingdom, and authoritatively invite into it those on His right hand, calling them the 'blessed of His Father.'" (Jamieson-Fausset-Brown on Mark 10:40.) When the sons of Zebedee went to Jesus as the executor of their heavenly inheritance, they were more correct in thinking that He had that authority than many who have tried to explain His answer. He had told His disciples (John 5:22), "The Father does not judge anyone, but has turned the judgment entirely over to the Son, in order that all may honor the Son as they honor the Father." James and John came with their request to Jesus shortly before the Passover which Jesus ate with His disciples in the Upper Room. In that Upper Room, Jesus told them (Luke 22:29-30): "As My Father has assigned My kingdom to Me, so I appoint you to eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, to sit on thrones, and to judge the twelve tribes of Israel." Paul says (2 Tim. 4:8), "Now there is waiting for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day; not only to me, but to all who love to see Him come again." Jesus will lay the garland of glory on the head of His Apostle. While the Father has from the beginning of the world (Matt. 25:34) prepared special glories for certain individuals (Matt. 20:23) and has determined how these glories are to be distributed, that same Father has appointed His Son to assign the places at His right and at His left.

I would suggest that Mark 10:40 be translated: "But to sit at My right or at My left is something I can give only to those for whom it has been prepared."

St. Louis, Missouri

W. F. BECK



## THEOLOGICAL OBSERVER

### THE 1950 THEOLOGICAL CONFERENCES IN EUROPE

Plans have been completed for the continuation of theological conferences in Europe which our Synod began in 1948. Whereas in the past two years these conferences were held at Bad Boll in Wuertemberg, this year's conferences will be conducted in Bad Harzburg, Neuendettelsau, and Berlin. Arrangements have also been made for conferences of shorter duration in Alsace and London. The commissioners appointed by President Behnken are: Dr. Herm. Harms, Rev. E. L. Roschke, President of the Western District, Dr. J. T. Mueller, Dr. L. W. Spitz, and Professor M. J. Naumann. Professor Theo. Hoelty-Nickel of Valparaiso University, who is in Germany this summer, will enrich the program with a lecture on the character of the Lutheran service in our land. The conferences to be held in Germany will extend throughout the month of August.

The program of the conferences will revolve about the general theme "Christ loved the Church" and will deal with the commission and power granted the Church by her Lord Jesus Christ. Subtopics of the general theme will be: "He has made us kings and priests" (the universal priesthood of all believers); "The ministry of reconciliation" (the preaching ministry: its basis and its effective operation); "Ye have suffered a while" (the Church in tribulation); "Behold, I come quickly" (the Church in the assurance of victory). The essays to be presented will discuss the subtopics from various points of view: the Biblical-exegetical, the dogmatic-theological, the apologetic, and the practical. Themes of the essays to be read are: The "state" of being a Christian according to Scripture; The universal priesthood in the Lutheran Church; Perversions of the "state" of being a Christian — a critique of fanatical schismatics and institutionalists; "Faith is a living, dynamic, active, and powerful thing" — the universal priesthood as it manifests itself in the life of the Lutheran Church; The office of the ministry according to Scripture and its relation to the congregation and to the universal priesthood; The Lutheran concept of "office" (*Amt*); The pastor as a preacher; The pastor as a shepherd of souls; What does Scripture teach regarding the necessity and blessing of tribulation?; Luther on temptation, tribulation, and submission in suffering; The witness of the Christian and the Church in times of tribulation; The Christian hope according to the witness of Jesus,

the Apostles, and the Early Church; De-emphasis and over-emphasis of eschatology; "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith"—the pious devotional life of the individual Christian and of the congregation in tribulation and hope.

The conferences will be attended by theologians and pastors of the Free Churches and the United Lutheran Church of Germany. Essays will be read also by German and Scandinavian theologians. May the Lord of the Church bless also these conferences and through them strengthen the walls of our Lutheran Zion and extend the frontiers of His kingdom.

P. M. B.

#### VALPARAISO UNIVERSITY, 1925—1950

This year marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the acquisition by Lutherans of our Church of Valparaiso University and the beginning of the conversion of this school (founded in 1859) into a Lutheran university. In commemoration of this event, Valparaiso University observed on May 21 Founders' Day, issued a handsome silver and blue stamp, of which forty million are being distributed, and organized, so the *Valparaiso Bulletin* (May-June issue) informs us, a committee of approximately 250 synodical leaders under the leadership of Governor Henry F. Schricker of Indiana with the purpose in view of "bringing Valparaiso University to the attention of people interested in the welfare of the Church and the nation."

Our MONTHLY congratulates Valparaiso University on the occasion of this anniversary. Who could have dreamed twenty-five years ago that the Lord would so overtly bless the faith of those who in 1925 acquired Valparaiso University and resolved that, under God, this school should become a Christian and Lutheran university. Who would have believed twenty-five years ago that this school, dependent for support on tuition fees and freewill offerings of individuals, congregations, and consecrated groups of men and women, would not only survive the crises of this quarter century, but would grow into an institution of which Governor Schricker recently said that it is now one of the nation's great universities "which is only beginning to make itself felt in its service to the Church and to the general welfare of the country." Who would have believed twenty-five years ago—and perhaps most of us were too fainthearted to believe it—that by 1950 more than 2,000 students would attend Valparaiso University and that it would be possible for the present president of this school, Dr. O. P. Kretzmann, to say of the most recent graduates of this University: "It is my honest conviction that these graduates are about

as well prepared for the second half of the twentieth century as they can possibly be."

Valparaiso University as of 1950 is another illustration of the power of a living faith, of fervent and persistent prayer, and of unfeigned love and devotion to the cause of the Savior's kingdom. God's blessing has rested on those who in 1925 conceived the idea of founding a Christian university. He also blessed those thousands of Christians in our Church who throughout these many years loyally supported this school with their various talents. He has blessed the consecrated efforts of the administrative officers and the Board of Directors of this school. He has richly blessed the thousands of students who within the past quarter century attended this school. He has blessed this school particularly also through its faculties. He has given this school many Christian men and women whose great concern inside and outside the classroom has not only been to teach effectively, but also sympathetically to guide their students into the ways of Biblical truth. Dr. Kretzmann did not overstate the case when he wrote in the *Bulletin* quoted above: "Ultimately the test of any educational institution lies in the caliber and stature of the men and women of its staff. . . . I would be untrue to my deepest convictions if I did not say a word of gratitude to all members of our faculty who have again gone far beyond the line of duty in their various activities. Financially their reward is often small; in terms of the years and character and knowledge and immortal souls their reward will be exceedingly great."

The MONTHLY joins Valparaiso University's thousands of friends in wishing it God's continued purest and richest blessings. P. M. B.

#### THE WRITTEN AND SPOKEN WORD

Under this title Professor Uuraas Saarnivaara, in the *Lutheran Quarterly*, May, 1950, discusses the question whether Luther gave priority to the written or to the spoken Word as the means of grace. This question was first raised by the Luther renaissance and then made an issue by the Barthian theologians, who claim that the written Word is merely a static Word (*Deus dixit*), while the oral proclamation is the dynamic and existential Word of God (*Deus dicit*). In the Free Conference at Bad Boll in 1948 one or two theologians went so far as to question the efficacy of the written Word as the regenerating power of God. (Cp. *The Story of Bad Boll*, 27.) They insisted that the *kerygma* (Rom. 16:25; 1 Cor. 1:21, etc.) must be understood as a verbal noun, denoting the act of proclaiming rather than the

content of the proclamation. Professor Saarnivaara seeks to find a solution for the apparent conflict in Luther's theology, where the emphasis at times is placed exclusively on the spoken Word and at other times on the written Word. The author first brings the pertinent references in which Luther states that "God does not wish to deal with us otherwise than through the spoken word and the sacraments, and that whatever without the word and sacraments is extolled as spirit is the devil himself." (Smalcald Articles, Part III, Art. VIII, and especially Art. IV.) "The oral word must before anything else be present and be grasped with the ears if the Holy Spirit is to come into the heart, who enlightens us through the word and works faith." (WA. 29, 581, St. L. XI:1736 f.) "The unique work of Christ, who has suffered and risen from the dead, God has, through the word, placed in the mouth of the apostles and the ministers of the Church, and in cases of emergency of all Christians, to the end that they through it would distribute and proclaim the forgiveness of sins to those who desire it. Thus, if you there will seek forgiveness of sins you will surely find it. . . . But if you do not wish to seek it there [in my mouth], you shall be bound to your sins, do what you will." (WA. 52, 273, St. L. XIII:1957.)

Professor Saarnivaara next lists several references from Luther's writings in which Luther maintained that although the Scripture is written by men, it is God's Word, and therefore all doctrines in conflict with the Scriptures are lies. He states that for Luther and his time in general the questions of the inerrancy of the Scriptures and of verbal inspiration were no problem, and that Luther made no attempt to harmonize apparent discrepancies, because they do not endanger the articles of Christian faith. Luther "demanded that the word of God is to be taken and believed as it is, without adding any 'allegorical,' 'spiritual,' or other artificial interpretations to it. Our faith 'must above all things be based on clear Scriptures, which are to be understood simply according to the sound and meaning of the words.'" Professor Saarnivaara holds that Luther saw no conflict between the statements "Scripture is the normative word of God, and that God bestows His grace and forgives sins by means of the spoken word and sacraments. All preaching and administration of sacraments have their source in the written word of God and must take place according to it. Therefore, the proclamation of the word (in sermons and in personal absolution and counselling) and the administration of sacraments is inseparably connected with the Scriptures. Only a scriptural teaching and preaching, and consolation leads

men to the knowledge of Christ and salvation in Him." In other words, the written Word is the only source and norm of Christian preaching and the spoken Word the means of grace. In this connection Luther makes some rather bold statements, such as, "The Gospel is not a writing, but a spoken Word which explains Scripture," or, "The nature of the Gospel of the New Testament in distinction from the Old Testament is that it must be preached and proclaimed in an oral and living voice," or, "The Church is a 'mouth-house' not a 'pen-house.'"

Does Luther really mean to say that God performs His gracious work only through the oral proclamation, the administration of the Sacraments, and through the *mutuum colloquium*? Is the purpose of the writing of the New Testament only to serve as a bulwark against heresies, while the Gospel as a means of grace is to be continued only in the oral Word? Professor Saarnivaara states that according to Luther the Holy Spirit may engender faith also through the reading of the Word, and cites Luther's comments to 1 John 5:13. These words are so significant that we give them in full (as translated from the Weimar edition):

The Apostle wants that this is to be understood of the increase of faith, in order that we may day by day grow in the sure knowledge and certainty. . . . Writing is a means or way whereby we attain to knowledge and faith. . . . If writing can accomplish this, how much more effectually does a living speech do it? . . . Christ comes through the testimony, through Scripture and spoken word (*venit per scripturam et verbum locale*). . . . Why should we be asked to read the Bible if Scripture is dead? If they [the fanatics] have received the Holy Spirit without a spoken word and Scripture, why do they write books and bother others with a work that they themselves despise? . . . We teach that the Word is to be read and heard; through reading the Holy Spirit comes where He wills (*docemus, ut legatur, auditur verbum, lecto venit spiritus sanctus, ubi voluerit*). . . . The Scriptures are to be written in the heart, they must be read and meditated upon. Satan cannot stay where he hears God's Word read. (WA. 20, 789, St. Louis, IX:1514.)

Professor Saarnivaara believes that Luther in this reference only wished to stress that if the written Word can engender faith, how much more the oral Word, and that it is only in exceptional cases that God works faith through the written Word.

Three observations are in order. In the first place, it is in our opinion oversimplification to state that "the written Word of God

is primarily a 'revelation Word,' which is the norm and standard of all faith, life, and teaching. The spoken Word (preaching, absolution, Sacraments) is the actual 'means-of-grace-Word,' through which God forgives sins, works faith, and imparts His Holy Spirit." He goes too far when he states that "Luther never says that Scripture has the office or ministry of reconciliation or that Christ has given the power of the Keys to the written Word; neither does Scripture itself contain any such statement. The ministry of reconciliation and the power of the Keys are given to the living Christians of each generation, not to Scripture. God may work faith through the written Word, namely, faith in Him and His truth and promises, so that the penitent sinner can seek the Gospel in the Church from the ministry of reconciliation and be justified by believing it." In our opinion, Luther's bold statements in support of the oral Word as the means of grace were necessary as an antithesis to Rome's sacramentalism. Luther's boldest statements occur in those sermons and writings in which he inveighs against Rome's theory that God deals with man only through the Sacraments performed *ex opere operato*. In that connection Luther is prompted to say in his massive manner that "das Wort muss geschrieen werden."

In the second place, Luther's emphasis on the oral proclamation places a tremendous responsibility upon the Christians, whose oral witness the Holy Spirit employs as a means of grace, and particularly upon the pastor, who as Christ's ambassador is the Holy Spirit's instrument to engender faith. The fact is that the Holy Spirit accommodates Himself to human psychology. Experience shows that in daily life the oral word of a living personality, the human voice with its inflection and modulation, is a powerful factor. Is it not true that when the pastor after careful preparation reads aloud to the congregation portions of the Bible the hearer is ordinarily much more deeply affected than by private and silent reading? In delivering his sermons the pastor will therefore be extremely solicitous in seeing to it that he not only proclaims nothing but God's Word, but that he will proclaim the message in such a way that his word is really a "living word."

And in the third place, Lutherans should carefully consider Professor Saarnivaara's plea, lest Lutheran theologians exchange Luther's concept of the Word for that of Calvin. He points out that while Luther laid great emphasis on the *viva vox ecclesiae*, Calvin held that meditation in solitude, either on the basis of the written Word or of one's private thoughts, was the way to God. Professor Saarnivaara fears that some Lutherans lean toward the Calvinistic view and "profess



faith in Scripture as the inspired and infallible Word of God, but in practice make void and of no effect some clear statements of the written Word through their doctrinal tradition." He believes that many Reformed who say that "God's chief agency in reaching souls is other souls" are closer to Luther's views on the oral Word than many Lutherans.

We are grateful to Professor Saarnivaara for stressing the "means-of-grace-word" and reminding us of Luther's dictum that when the Church teaches and proclaims the Gospel *in harmony with the Scriptures*, its voice is the voice of God, Luke 10:16. If it teaches anything in conflict with the written Word of God, its voice is the voice of the devil. But an earnest caution is in order lest the Lutheran theologian, in wishing to safeguard the dynamic character of the Word of God, will lose its normative value. The Lutheran pastor will constantly keep both truths in mind: "Scriptures cannot be broken," and "faith cometh by hearing."

The "Common Confession" in discussing the Word of God under the chapter of the means of grace does not depart from historic Lutheran theology. Of course, modern antitheses have compelled dogmaticians to discuss the Word of God under Prolegomena, where they set forth that the Word of God is the only source of doctrine. However, this can also be done very effectively under the locus of the means of grace. The important thing is that we avoid all overstatements lest we become so involved in maintaining the inerrancy of Scriptures and the all-sufficiency of the Scriptures as the means of grace that we ignore the "living Word." No Lutheran pastor would feel satisfied to have directed an alarmed sinner only to the written Word. Nevertheless, he will exercise great care lest he so stress the efficacy of the spoken Word and the Sacraments that the written Word as the life-giving Word is ignored. He knows from personal experience that the Holy Spirit is in the written Word and speaks to him there. He knows that his parishioners in their private and family devotions have in the written Word the living voice of their Savior effectively inviting, comforting, and strengthening them. As a curate of souls he will apply either the written, or the spoken, or the visible Word, or all three at the same time, as the needs of his parishioners require.

F. E. M.

BARTH, BRUNNER, NIEBUHR — NEO-ORTHODOX OR LIBERAL?

Under the title "The Liberalism of Neo-Orthodoxy" published in the *Christian Century* (three installments beginning with the June 7 issue) Charles Clayton Morrison presents a concise and penetrating

analysis of the theology of Barth, Brunner, and Niebuhr. He points out, first of all, that "Neo-Orthodoxy" is a misnomer. It has often been stated that Neo-Orthodoxy as represented by its chief exponents, Barth, Brunner, and Niebuhr, is the very antithesis of liberal theology. Many writers believed that the Barthian theology had sounded the death knell of modernistic Liberalism. (Cp. H. Rolston, *A Conservative Looks to Barth and Brunner*, p. 17 f.; Herman Sasse: "In Karl Barth liberal theology brought forth its own conqueror. He could overcome the liberal theology because he was bone of its bones and flesh of its flesh." *Here We Stand*, p. 155.) Morrison, however, states, and we believe correctly so, that "there is far more common ground for both argument and understanding between Liberalism and Neo-Orthodoxy than is generally supposed." He even goes so far as to state "that the exponents of Neo-Orthodoxy have not sufficiently recognized the strong currents of Liberalism in their own thinking." It is, of course, a fact that the neo-orthodox theologians on both sides of the Atlantic went through a training in liberal theology, and Morrison is correct when he states that these neo-orthodox theologians did not really reject "their earlier Liberalism as such, but certain conclusions reached by liberal thinkers of the past generation." In this evaluation he seems to agree with the findings of C. Van Til in his incisive critique "The New Modernism, an Appraisal of Barth and Brunner." Morrison holds that Neo-Orthodoxy is not opposed to Liberalism as such, but to an "arrested Liberalism," a Liberalism which holds to certain prematurely crystallized conclusions and thus actually denies the fundamental premise of liberal theology, namely, that Liberalism is a method, rather than a creed, a method whereby man is continually growing in his theological understanding.

Morrison examines the dialectical Neo-Orthodoxy in regard to seven features: (1) its acceptance of the higher criticism of the Bible and, in general, the findings of modern science; (2) its acceptance of the Biblical *Weltanschauung*; (3) its shift of the locus of revelation from the Bible to the living history that is mirrored in the Bible; (4) its acceptance of the findings of New Testament scholarship; (5) its eschatology; (6) its doctrine of original sin; and (7) its existentialism.

1. Morrison reminds his readers of the rise of liberal theology as it manifested itself in the acceptance of the "scientific" approach to the Bible, which brought liberal theologians into a sharp clash with conservative, or orthodox, theology. He holds that Neo-Orthodoxy "shares with Liberalism in the attempt to orient the Christian faith

away from the Biblical literalism of the six-day creationism of the traditional school," and that it really applies the liberal principles of Higher Criticism and thereby makes the Bible relevant for our age. Our CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY has often pointed out that there is a diametrical cleavage between Neo-Orthodoxy and conservative theology in Bibliology, and that Neo-Orthodoxy does not represent the Lutheran view of a "dynamic revelation," but the liberal and modernistic view of revelation.

2. According to Morrison, "static Liberalism" denies that the Bible presents a *Weltanschauung* which is the heart and core of Christian faith because it followed modern science of a generation ago, which held that the Biblical *Weltanschauung* was completely out of date. Liberal theology, therefore, gave to science the task of solving the problem of the nature of the universe and reserves for theology only the fixing of a high standard of morality. It is against a view which reduces Christianity to mere moralism that Neo-Orthodoxy vigorously protests. It presents a *Weltanschauung* which is grounded in the nature of the cosmos itself. "The Christian Gospel, it says, is not primarily a disclosure of ideal human conduct; it is a vision and a proclamation of the nature of the world and a meaning of human existence." Morrison believes that Neo-Orthodoxy views the Christian faith as a whole, in which the following parts constitute the Biblical *Weltanschauung*: God as the Creator of everything; the whole creation subject to His sovereign will; man created in God's image, a free and responsible agent, and therefore prone to sin; human history as the scene of God's self-disclosure and the Hebrew-Christian history in which God most clearly revealed Himself as Judge and Redeemer. The revelation of God culminates in the life, teaching, death, and resurrection of Jesus as this total event is interpreted by His early disciples.

The Bible is therefore "the mirror in which mankind for all time may discern and thereby participate in this world outlook." Static Liberalism had failed to see this, while Neo-Orthodoxy has brought into bold outline this "Biblical *Weltanschauung* which, like a palimpsest lies underneath the Bible's historically incidental pre-scientific outlook." This to Morrison is "strictly within the liberal tradition."

3. Static Liberalism, by completely humanizing the Bible, had robbed it of its revelatory character. Neo-Orthodoxy agrees with the position of Liberalism that the Bible and revelation must not be equated, but differs from it in that it accepts a revelation, namely, "in the living historical experience of which the humanly composed

literature of the Bible is the reflecting mirror." As such the Bible is an indispensable auxiliary of the revelation in history. According to Morrison, Neo-Orthodoxy places the locus of revelation in the empirical historical fact centering in the life of Jesus and thereby remains in the liberal tradition, which sets man free to exercise his intelligence in reading the Bible and to find in it the concepts which constitute the "Christian *Weltanschauung*."

4. Morrison believes that Neo-Orthodoxy is more liberal and radical in its attitude toward the New Testament than "static Liberalism." It fully accepts the contemporary New Testament scholarship which takes a different attitude toward the historicity of the New Testament writings than static Liberalism did. Neo-Orthodoxy, in line with contemporary New Testament scholarship, wishes to magnify the Person of Jesus "as the supreme event in the long story of historical events which had been pregnant with the divine revelation." For it was Jesus who kindled the disciples' imagination to see in Him the final revelation of the divine Father who in Jesus reconciled the world to Himself."

5. Liberalism saw in the "ethical teachings" of Jesus the "Gospel" of the kingdom of God which was to be established upon earth. Contemporary scholarship, however, sees the entire New Testament within the framework of eschatology. Neo-Orthodoxy projects a world view in a dimension which is beyond temporal history, that is, in a dimension which transcends temporal history here and now, and which may be called "the history of salvation." "The Neo-Orthodox view of the end of history from one viewpoint embraces temporal history and from another is distinct from it." All Christians participate in this extratemporal history and find here the assurance of redemption, the meaning of existence, and the hope of the ultimate fulfillment of the Creator's purpose. Morrison holds that only a liberal mind can agree with an interpretation of history such as Reinhold Niebuhr offers in his *Faith and History*.

6. Liberal theology views sin merely as an expression of man's immaturity or ignorance or a maladjustment of some sort. Neo-Orthodoxy speaks of original sin; however, not in the conservative tradition, but in the liberal tradition. Niebuhr, for example, follows the empirical method of examining nature itself by introspection and observation and "finds the ground and explanation of sin as the very constitution of man, that is, in the inevitable imbalance between man's freedom and his finitude."

7. The final structural concept in which Dr. Morrison finds a close

affinity between Neo-Orthodoxy and Liberalism is existentialism. Most of us have been under the impression that it was precisely at this point that Neo-Orthodoxy departed radically from Liberal Theology. Morrison, however, makes a good case for this contention. It is, of course, true that it is extremely difficult to define existentialism, because there are many types of this philosophy, e.g., that of Neo-Thomism, of Kierkegaard, of Heidegger, of Sartre, of Barth. Morrison holds that the core of existentialism "is the doctrine that the apprehension of and response to the Christian gospel revolves ultimately upon faith and not upon rational proof." The Neo-Orthodox theologians believe that existentialism must answer the all-important question: How does man apprehend the Christian *Weltanschauung*? According to Morrison, Neo-Orthodoxy summarizes its answer as follows: "Christianity rests, at bottom, upon faith, not upon reason. And faith is regarded as essentially decision and commitment, not rationalized belief. The acceptance of the Christian *Weltanschauung* and the commitment of man's life in loyal devotion to the sovereign will of his Creator constitute, according to neo-orthodoxy, a venture of unproved faith. In some crucial moment of experience, man, not in mere intellectual curiosity, but in the profound seriousness of anguish or despair, asks the supreme and inescapable question: What is the ultimate and most real nature of this world and the meaning of my existence in it? In such a moment—the 'existential moment'—his answer is not determined by rational thought; it is an answer in which his whole existence is involved." The Barthian theologians must therefore reject Sartre's answer, which is nothing more than naturalistic determinism, and rather follow Kierkegaard. Man is actually and really confronted by God and in this encounter he must decide where he will find the ultimate meaning of all existence, whether in a self-existent world unable to answer man's basic question or, according to the Christian *Weltanschauung*, in a world "created by God and over which He reigns in righteousness and grace."

In this crisis-situation man's answer is at the same time a decision—an act of faith, and as Morrison points out, *not* an "act of rationalized belief." This decision is the existential moment (the German Barthians call it *Ereignis*), however, not a coerced decision, but a spontaneous and free act of man.

At first glance this seems to be a radical departure from Liberalism. But Dr. Morrison contends that it is indeed a departure from "arrested liberalism," but not from genuine Liberalism. The former refused to go beyond the data of science and philosophy in seeking an



answer to the meaning and significance of existence, and by ignoring the Supernatural (Aubrey in *Present Theological Tendencies* distinguishes between the Super-natural and the Supra-natural) landed in the existentialism of Sartre. Morrison believes that "the existentialism of neo-orthodoxy, with its doctrine of the limitation of human reason, is an empirical and realistic attempt to answer the question as to the ultimate nature of the universe and the meaning of human existence. And this, I maintain, invests it with the highest credentials of liberalism. In support of this proposition, I wish to call two witnesses, whose liberalism is beyond question. In fact they represent the extreme left wing of liberal thought." He thinks that the modern pragmatists and empiricists have a great deal in common with Neo-Orthodoxy and says of William James in particular, that he "was in truth an existentialist. He was not far from the kingdom of neo-orthodoxy." After discussing the relation of Dewey, James, and Kierkegaard he raises the question: "Is neo-orthodoxy less empirical than the answers of Dewey and James? I am bound to say that it is no less empirical than the other two!"

From the Lutheran viewpoint, Dr. Morrison's analysis of Neo-Orthodoxy shows that no *approachment* between Lutheranism and Barthianism is possible. Lutheran theology holds that there is objective truth outside of man's experience, a "given," while in Liberalism and/or Neo-Orthodoxy truth is truth only in the encounter (cf. title of Bruner's book: *Wahrheit in Begegnung*). F. E. M.

#### PROCLAMATION OF THE EVANGELICAL CHURCH OF GERMANY

*Christ und Welt*, a German weekly published in Stuttgart and one of the leading German newspapers which emerged since the war, features in its issue of May 4 a report of the annual convention of the Evangelical Church of Germany (EKID) held in Berlin in April of this year. The report indicates that the Soviets put no obstacles in the way of the convention but rather, as they have done on similar occasions, gave evidence that they intended to make the convention as agreeable for the delegates as possible. Nevertheless the convention did not fail to take note of the serious difficulties which in many ways are impeding the work of the Church especially in the Eastern Zone and of the critical political situation in which Germany finds itself at the present time. The convention therefore released a public proclamation in which it called attention to the tensions and difficulties confronting the German people and in which it also appealed to all governments of the world to restore and maintain peace among the



nations. We believe this proclamation to be of such importance that we have translated it for the MONTHLY. It reads as follows:

In Berlin, where the war began and where we are facing the terrifying reality that God's judgment on us has not yet come to an end, we, the Evangelical Church of Germany, are confronted in our convention by the question what the Church can do to bring about and preserve peace.

Countless terrified human beings in the entire world are today clamoring for peace. They are living in constant fear and anxiety that there may be another war. Our own people, unarmed as they are, are subjected to powers which view one another with fear and suspicion. The Iron Curtain severs the body of our people, and conflicts of the most serious consequences may result at a moment's notice. In this crisis we see God's judgment. For wars do not rise from themselves. Rather, men begin wars because they do not honor God and because they disregard God's laws. But God is not mocked. When men revolt against God, the demons of hell break loose as well as the spirits of merciless power, of strife which engenders hate, of perplexity and fear. Nations are even now in revolt against God and are trampling under foot the laws which He intended for their common good.

Our Lord Jesus Christ says: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God." As such who believe that God wishes men to live at peace, we find ourselves called upon to seek peace with all men and to strive for the establishment of peace among all nations.

We therefore implore all our people as we have done in our Eisenach message: Do not cultivate the spirit of hatred and bitterness. Do not permit yourselves to become tools of a propaganda which fosters enmity between nations and incites to war. Neither become tools of peace propagandas which in reality sow hatred and promote war. Do not become victims of the illusion that our sad lot can be remedied only through another war. We call upon all our people in the east and in the west: Make your influence felt among all who are in politically responsible positions so that they will not agree to a war in which Germans will fight against Germans. We ask everyone seriously to consider whether he could in the event of such a war take a weapon into his hand!

We appeal to the governments of our people: Respect justice, whose author and preserver God is. Practice justice! There is no justice without recognition of the claim which God has on man. God is Lord. He alone has the final claim on man's life and entire existence. Only if the State respects this holy claim of God will the State be able to protect the dignity and freedom of man.

Therefore no man should be deprived of his freedom without due process of law. Therefore no pressure or terrorizing methods should be employed in matters of faith and conscience, and no one should be persecuted because of his faith, his world view, or his race, and no one should be coerced into actions which are contrary to his conscience. We beseech the governments of our people not to violate this sacred right of man which he possesses as a creature of God. Such violations will destroy all order and national peace.

We beg all those in authority to execute every possible measure of social justice, to insist that all suppressed and disinherited, all who were bombed out and became homeless victims of the war, get a fair deal and adequate living quarters.

We adjure the governments and representatives of our people not to let themselves be deceived by any power of the world into the belief that a war will bring a solution and a turning point of our great distress. We are grateful that some governments, in their constitutions, protect those who for reasons of conscience refuse to go to war. We beg *all* governments of the world to grant this same protection. Whoever for reasons of conscience refuses to go to war should be assured of the intercessions of the Church.

We appeal to the military powers ruling over us and to all rulers of the world to set free at last all prisoners of war, all displaced persons, and all others who, as a result of the war, fell into your hands. Be merciful toward all those who are under your jurisdiction. Conclude honorable peace treaties. Remove at last the zonal boundaries dividing Eastern Germany from Western Germany, for these boundaries are dividing our people and jeopardizing the peace of the world. Give the German people the opportunity to create for themselves a new order of justice in which East and West might again become one. Make efforts that the present boundaries of States may no longer be walls between national and ideological spheres of influence.

We appeal to the governments of the entire world to join hands in a new union of justice in which peace will be sought and preserved. The price which every nation in such a union may have to pay may be high, but it can never be too high if through that union the peace of the world is won and preserved. We plead with all churches of the world to join us in this appeal to the nations and not to relent in bringing this appeal to the governments of their respective countries.

God's avenging hand is still stretched out over us. If He does not show mercy, all our efforts are in vain. But He is a God of peace and promises us His grace. Therefore we must pray

unceasingly for peace. We beg the Christians in the entire world to join us in this prayer. We call upon the evangelical churches of Germany regularly to pray for peace in their services, to join with other congregations on certain days in a common prayer for peace, and to include in these prayers especially those governments which are chiefly responsible for war and peace.

P. M. B.

#### ROME AND THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT

In the *Commonweal* (April 28) Rev. Thomas Boyle, a priest of the Antigonish diocese in Canada, submits an instructive overview on the attitude of the Catholic Church to the ecumenical movement which, following the ecumenical assemblies held in Panama (1916), Stockholm (1925), Lausanne (1927), and Oxford (1937) culminated, in 1948, in the formation, at Amsterdam, of the World Council of Churches. Rev. Boyle expresses the relation of the Catholic Church to these ecumenical assemblies in the following words:

The first approach to the Holy See by the leaders of the ecumenical movement . . . took place in 1919 when a delegation called on Pope Benedict XV. Their report stated that "the Holy Father received them courteously, listened to their story and expressed sympathy with their purpose, but intimated tactfully, but no less decisively, that there was one way and only one in which the object they had at heart could be realized, namely, that they and those for whom they spoke should submit themselves to the one whom their Lord had appointed to be their rightful head, the one to whom they were then speaking.

In 1927, a decree of the Holy Office forbade Catholics to attend the Lausanne Conference. . . . After the conference, an encyclical (*Mortalium Animos*) was issued giving the reasons for the abstention of Catholics. Chiefly it was because of the underlying assumption of the organizers that among the existing churches there is none that is simply the true Church and that all Christian bodies are, although imperfectly, the Church of Christ. Nor were Catholics permitted to take part in the Amsterdam Assembly in 1948. Finally, the very first sentence of the recent *Instruction to Local Ordinaries about the Ecumenical Movement* reads, "The Catholic Church takes no part in ecumenical conventions and other assemblies of a similar character."

Nevertheless, so Rev. Boyle continues:

The recent *Instruction* of Pope Pius XII wants to help the ecumenical movement to attain its goal. For this reason the Church recommends it to the fervent prayers of the Catholic people. Furthermore, she permits competent theologians to participate in

discussion groups which may offer "a desirable occasion for spreading a knowledge of Catholic doctrine with which non-Catholics are generally not sufficiently conversant." . . . While it is true that unity for practical activity without unity in doctrinal matters cannot be effective in an essential mission of the Church, the spreading of the Kingdom of God on earth, nevertheless a mutual alignment of forces against materialism, whether of the communistic or the secularist variety, can be very useful in the promotion of a secondary aim of the Church, the building of the Good Society. The doctrinal basis here is natural theology. Concerted action for the defense of the principles of the natural law are given special encouragement in the *Instruction*.

In the above, Rev. Boyle has indicated some reasons for the change of attitude by the Catholic Church toward the ecumenical movement. Yet it seems in order to enumerate these reasons and to add others which no doubt are playing a part in this change of attitude. These reasons are:

1. By allowing competent Catholic theologians to cross swords with non-Catholic theologians, Roman theology is at least assured of a full hearing;
2. The Catholic Church discovered in 1948, to her great surprise, that it was possible for non-Catholic Christians to agree on a common confession of faith, though, indeed, this confession is from our Lutheran point of view in important respects inadequate;
3. Even in Catholic theology there is a current of thought which exalts the *Una Sancta* above the visible organization of the Catholic Church;
4. The Catholic Church discovered that the liberal element in present-day Protestantism had to give way at Amsterdam to a positive position toward Biblical Christianity;
5. The Catholic Church, which has been most outspoken in denouncing Soviet Communism and is therefore largely responsible for the deepening antagonisms and growing tensions between the Soviet Union and the United States, will greatly strengthen her position if she can rally to her support also non-Catholic Christian churches;
6. The Catholic Church, which has, in recent years, frequently outplayed her hands in the political arena, has discovered that American Protestants are not yet ready to submit to Catholic power and authoritarianism, and that she must therefore tread tactfully and cautiously so as not to estrange also on religious grounds many non-Catholic Christians.

Yet, even though the Holy See has, since 1948, shown a more sympathetic attitude toward the ecumenical movement, particularly over in Europe, Roman Catholicism will not yield one inch from its central authority in the Vatican and will continue, as it has throughout the centuries, to be the irreconcilable foe of the free interpretation of Scripture and of the Scriptural teaching of the priesthood of all believers. *Roma semper eadem* also in 1950, when it is possible, as it is in Europe, for evangelical and Roman theologians to meet and to discuss Christian doctrine.

P. M. B.

#### CATHOLIC WORD LIST

*Our Sunday Visitor*, a national Catholic Action weekly, published in recent issues definitions of Catholic words and terms. Anyone interested in obtaining a copy of the entire list is asked by the editor of *Our Sunday Visitor* to apply to Our Sunday Visitor Press, Huntington, Ind., for a copy of *A Catholic Word List* (price 20 cents). We have found these definitions helpful for a better understanding of Catholic life and thought and for interpreting Catholic teaching. The list might prove useful also to pastors who are instructing Catholic converts in our Lutheran doctrines. For their benefit in particular we are submitting a few samples from the word list:

*High Mass*—A sung Mass without the assistance of a deacon or subdeacon.

*Holy Water*—A sacramental consisting of water mixed with salt and blessed by a priest; used to bless persons and things.

*House of God*—Refers to the Blessed Virgin Mary in whose womb Christ dwelt; may also refer to a Catholic church wherein Christ dwells.

*Holy Orders*—A sacrament by which bishops, priests, and other ministers of the Church are ordained and receive the power and grace to perform their sacred duties. There are seven steps by which a cleric advances in succession to the priesthood: Ostiarius (Porter); Exorcist, Lector, Acolyte, Sub-deacon, Deacon, Priest. The first four are called Minor Orders and the last three are called Holy Orders.

*Indulgence*—A remission granted by the Church of the temporal punishment, which remains due to sin, after its guilt has been forgiven. If it remits all punishment it is called plenary. An indulgence may be partial, i.e., part of the temporal punishment of sin is remitted to persons rightly disposed.

*Indulgence, Apostolic*—Indulgences attached by the Pope or his delegate to crucifixes, rosaries, medals, and other images.

*Infused Virtues*—Virtues which come into the soul together with sanctifying grace, as the virtues of faith, hope, and charity.

*Inquisition*—An ecclesiastical organization for discovering and preventing heresy.

*Interdict*—A penalty inflicted by the Pope or bishop upon a group barring them from the use of the sacraments, religious services, and Christian burial.

P. M. B.

#### ITEMS FROM "RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE"

In 1943 Dr. Amos John Traver, professor of practical theology at Hamma Divinity School of Wittenberg College, Springfield, Ohio, introduced a two-hour elective course entitled "The Ministry of Writing." Dr. Traver's aim is to teach men how to be as good ministers when they sit down at their typewriters as they are when they stand in the pulpit. The course offers guidance and practice in publicity, advertising, letters, announcements, programs, editing parish bulletins, and in all writing normally required of a pastor. Dr. Traver advises his students "to turn newspaper man once a week; it is an important and necessary part of being a good pastor," and urges them to visit the newspaper office upon their arrival in the city where they will take a parish.

The British and Foreign Bible Society has speeded up the production of Bibles in Great Britain during the past nine months. During the past nine-month period 2,357,000 Scripture portions were published as compared with 1,800,000 during the previous twelve months. Over 7,000,000 copies in 369 languages and dialects were distributed throughout the world according to the report issued at the Society's recent annual meeting in London.

Mount Olivet Lutheran Church in Minneapolis probably has established a record in the number of new members received in one service. On Palm Sunday 650 new members—450 adults and 200 children—were received into membership. Dr. Reuben K. Youngdahl, pastor, said many of the new members became interested in his church after reading a reprint in the Minneapolis Sunday *Tribune* of an article which the *Christian Century* had printed about Mount Olivet as the first of a series of "twelve great churches of America." The majority of the new members were reached by a concerted effort by the church laity as well as staff members "to win persons without a church home for



Christ and the church during Lent." Six years ago, on All Saints' Sunday, Mount Olivet added 469 persons to its membership. At present somewhat more than 5,500 people are affiliated with this Augustana Lutheran congregation. It would be interesting to find out how the "life and growth" committee which makes every-member visitations is trained and how it operates.

Ground was broken at San Pedro, California, on a site overlooking Los Angeles harbor for an \$80,000 Norwegian seamen's church. The new edifice will be known as St. Olaf's Lutheran Church.

Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois, will be the scene of the Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches scheduled for the United States in 1953. Plans for the Evanston assembly will be drawn up in detail at the annual meeting of the 90-member Council Committee of the World Council in Toronto, Canada, July 8—15.

The Far Eastern Gospel Crusade, with international headquarters in St. Paul, Minnesota, is completing its plans for sending 500 new missionaries into the rural areas of Japan during the next five years. The Crusade, an independent Protestant organization, grew out of missionary projects carried on by Christian service men and women in the Far East during and following World War II. At present the Crusade is building a large missionary receiving home in Yokohama where missionary candidates will receive three months of intensive training before they are sent out into Japanese villages for pioneer work.

The 162d general assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., which met in Cincinnati during May, adopted a huge budget of \$17,049,880 for 1951. Of this sum \$2,225,000 was set aside for Christian education, \$7,537,000 for the Board of National Missions, and \$6,030,000 for the Board of Foreign Missions. In order to raise this sum the assembly voted that churches with a current expense budget under \$5,000 are requested to set their benevolence giving ratio at 13%; those with budgets between \$5,000 and \$10,000 at 14%; \$10,000 to \$25,000 at 18%; and \$25,000 and over at 22%.

The newly elected national president of the Episcopal Parish School Association, the Rev. David C. Colony of Metairie, La., has issued the report that Episcopal parish schools are spreading rapidly throughout the South. During the last two years eleven Episcopal schools have been established in Louisiana and are mushrooming throughout the nation, especially in the South. The Rev. Colony's school at Metairie,

La., was founded in February, 1947, with one teacher and twenty-five pupils. Today there are twenty-six teachers with more than 500 children registered for the fall term. According to the Rev. Colony, the rapid growth of the Episcopal parish schools during the past few years is "the church's answer to a too materialistic public school system . . . which has gotten away from any subject that can't be turned into dollars and cents." As a result of this overemphasis on the materialistic aspects of life, he feels people today have no emotional resources to fall back upon in times of crisis.

The Protestant Episcopal Diocese of Long Island established a precedent at its annual convention in Garden City, New York. By a unanimous vote, 800 delegates agreed to permit three women to serve on the diocesan council which administers the missionary, educational, youth, promotion, and social work of the diocese.

Major General G. K. Bourne, British city commandant of Berlin, laid the cornerstone for the new British Church of St. George, to be built at Charlottenburg, in the British sector of Berlin. The new structure will replace the former Church of St. George located in what is now the Soviet sector, which was badly damaged during the war.

Christian leaders in Berlin are deeply concerned about the distribution of the third edition of Professor A. W. Michulin's antireligious Soviet history textbook entitled "History of the Antique." The new edition is expected to increase by 30,000 the 55,000 copies of the Soviet textbook already issued by the official printing shop of the German Democratic Republic. The textbook is fundamentally anti-Christian and atheistic, asserting among other things that Jesus Christ never lived, that there is no God, and that the Bible is merely a collection of myths, legends, and tales. Professor Michulin's book is one of a set of four history texts written by Soviet historians which are being issued to East German teachers as a guide for history classes. The other three, similarly antireligious, are Professor Kosminskij's "Medieval History," Professor Jefimow's "Modern History I," and Professor Subok's "Modern History II."

A conference of pastors and theological students met at Betzdorf, Germany, and passed a resolution urging that students for the Protestant ministry should spend a year as self-supporting industrial or farm workers before ordination. The conference was held in the Evangelical School for Social Work at Friedewald Castle, an institution recently set up with the aid of some American Lutherans to provide special

training courses for Protestant clergymen and laymen engaged in all types of social activity. The resolution proposed that during the final examination theology candidates should be required to prove a reasonable theoretical knowledge of political economy and the history of the trade unions and the political workers' movements. Another recommendation of the conference urged that pastors in active service should be invited to attend courses and workshops to give them a thorough knowledge of social politics.

The Roman Catholic Church has made plans to build the University of Detroit into their largest Roman Catholic university in the world. In connection with the seventy-fifth anniversary of the university in 1952, the Rev. Celestin J. Steiner, S. J., president of the institution, declared that an appeal for \$20,000,000 will be made to finance the expansion program. Father Steiner said that five new buildings, a field house, administration building, a university chapel, one or more residence halls, and a student activities building will be started as soon as possible at a cost of \$5,000,000. Other construction will include three classroom buildings, an engineering laboratory, an addition to the faculty building, storage and utility buildings, and completion of parking space and other facilities.

Ecumenical patriarch Athenagoras of Istanbul told Eustatios Timoidus, president of the Friends of Byzantine Music, that he will retain the Byzantine music traditionally used in the Greek Orthodox Church.

A theological seminary for Russian Orthodox women has been opened in Paris under the sponsorship of Metropolitan Vladimir, head of the Russian Orthodox parishes in Western Europe. This first Russian Orthodox seminary ever set up for women will provide intensive courses for students preparing to enter Orthodox sisterhoods or seeking to qualify as teachers in Sunday schools. Orthodox women who are merely seeking to gain a deeper knowledge and understanding of their faith will also be admitted as students.

The Jewish Braille Institute of America has made the entire Hebrew Bible available for the blind in Braille. The project, comprising twenty encyclopedia-size volumes, took five years to complete. The internationally accepted Hebrew Braille alphabet was completed in 1936 and revised by a committee of prominent rabbis and scholars. The work on the Hebrew Braille Bible began in 1944 after the committee had put its final touches on desirable revisions in the alphabet.

ALEX W. C. GUEBERT

## BOOK REVIEW

*All books reviewed in this periodical may be procured from or through Concordia Publishing House, 3558 South Jefferson Avenue, St. Louis 18, Missouri.*

ARCHAEOLOGY AND BIBLE HISTORY. By Joseph P. Free. Van Kampen Press, Wheaton, Ill. xviii + 398 pages, 8½×6. \$5.00.

There are many books on the market on Biblical archaeology. Two features of Dr. Free's book make it a very desirable addition to this literature. In the first place, "the author seeks to follow the sequence of Bible history as a unifying thread, and to show how archaeological discoveries illuminate and confirm the successive events of Biblical history" (p. viii). A summary of Bible history is presented which begins with the creation account of Genesis and ends with the development of the Early Church of New Testament times. Wherever it is available, archaeological material is drawn upon to shed light on the events of each successive era. The second characteristic has already been indicated. In plain language the author tells us that he accepts the Bible as God's inspired Word. Hence he uses the archaeological discoveries in a constructive way to illuminate and confirm the Biblical account and not to undermine faith in its truth and reliability.

Dr. Joseph P. Free is a fundamentalist, but not an obscurantist. He knows the vast literature on the discoveries in Palestine, Egypt, and Mesopotamia. He holds the Ph.D. degree from Princeton University and for ten years has carried on research work in the field of archaeology and Near Eastern studies at the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago. He is now head of the Department of Archaeology at Wheaton College (Ill.), where he has taught for the last fourteen years, and also Archaeological Editor of the *Sunday School Times*. In addition he has made five study trips to Palestine, the Near East, and Europe.

Admittedly a book of 398 pages cannot deal exhaustively with all phases of Biblical archaeology. Problems that have arisen from archaeological discoveries could not be discussed fully in this survey presentation. However, this reviewer believes that the space devoted to "The Question of 'Wine and the Bible'" pp. 351—356, in which the author attempts to prove the Bible condemns the use of alcoholic drink, could have been used to better advantage. There are other instances of such digressions from archaeology which unfortunately also present his Reformed theology. Such a case is the statement on page 60: "Circumcision did not save Abraham or bring him and his posterity into vital relation with God, any more than baptism today saves a child or an adult; both are external

tokens of a covenant with God and a trust in God." A number of other doctrinal viewpoints are expressed which the Lutheran reader must reject.

In spite of these shortcomings, the Lutheran pastor and Bible student will welcome this publication to his library as a handbook of valuable information. Written in non-technical language, it can also be put into the hands of Sunday school and Bible class teachers. It will serve excellently as a textbook in Bible institutes.

Any history of the Bible must deal with the problems of Biblical chronology. Dr. Free does not evade them. In the pre-Abraham era he does not follow Bishop Ussher's computation. Assuming that there are many gaps in the genealogies of Genesis 5 and Genesis 11, he concludes that "In view of such evidence of compression of genealogies, it seems safe to conclude that the creation of man took place probably sometime between 4000 and 8000 B.C. or perhaps somewhat earlier" (p. 18). In the vexing maze of the chronology of the Divided Kingdom of Israel and Judah the author does not arrive at definite conclusions but hopes that "future study may throw more light on the synchronisms" (p. 203). Thus in a table of the reigns of the kings of Judah, he lets E. R. Thiele's date for Hezekiah stand as beginning in 716. However, 2 Kings 18:9 places the fall of Samaria (722 B.C.) "in the fourth year of King Hezekiah." It is not reasonable to suppose that the writer of Kings, who is so accurate in other data, should make a mistake in the date of the fall of the Northern Kingdom, an event which must have made a profound and lasting impression.

WALTER R. ROEHRS

GEGENWART CHRISTI (Christus praesens). Grundriss einer Dogmatik der Offenbarung. Von Otto A. Dilschneider. 2 Bände. Erster Band: 294 Seiten, 6×9. Zweiter Band: 364 Seiten. Preis: DM.24. C. Bertelsmann Verlag, Gütersloh.

The only European notice of this two-volume dogmatics which has come to our attention is the enthusiastic review article by Prof. C. T. Thomson of Edinburgh in *Evangelical Quarterly*, April, 1949, p. 133. We are rather surprised that German theologians have apparently ignored this dogmatics, since it deals particularly with problems of immediate significance for German theology. Dilschneider is oriented in the theology of the Barmen Confessional Synods of 1933 and 1934 with the Barthian watchword: "Man muss auf die Brüder hören, denn in diesem Aufeinander-Hören hat der Heilige Geist der Kirche ein Neues geschenkt." (Incidentally, Dr. Geo. Merz, an early exponent of this view, has recently corrected this shibboleth by the significant addition: "Man muss auf den Bruder hören, wenn er Gottes Wort spricht.") Dilschneider holds that the Church is held captive on the one hand by Lutheran confessionalism and on the other by the "orthodoxy" of Dialectical theology. The Church, however, cannot break this Babylonian captivity by a repristination theology and a return to the sixteenth century confessions, because every

generation must interpret God's Word in the light of its own tensions between faith and doubt. In our opinion the thesis of this dogmatics can be summarized as follows: Every period of the Church's history has been confronted by Christ as the Word. In the Old Testament, Christ was present *realiter*, e.g., in the burning bush, in the Rock which followed; in the days of His flesh, Christ was present *personaliter*; and today He is present *spiritualiter*, 2 Cor. 3:17. Man is therefore always confronted by the *Christus praesens*, and this encounter with Christ leads not only to a tension between doubt and faith, but also to an existential and dynamic confession. The present impasse in theology can therefore not be solved by a return to the First Article of our Creed—which was an issue in the Old Testament—nor even to the Second Article—the central problem of the sixteenth century—but by taking seriously the Third Article, the doctrine of the "Spirit."

Dilschneider develops this theme in three parts. The first part (I, 29—176) is of a historico-dogmatic nature in which the author attempts to establish his thesis that the creeds were formulated as the believer's solution of tensions between faith and doubt brought about by man's encounter with *Christus praesens*. In the second part (I, 179—280) he discusses the essence of Christ's revelation in the Old and New Testaments, a revelation of the *Christus praesens*. The third part (II, 9—363) is devoted to the real theme of this dogmatics, namely, that Christ is present *post Christum carnis* spiritually, namely, in the operation of the Holy Spirit, in judgment and grace, in the form of the Church, in Word and Sacrament, and finally in eschatology. The entire work is intended to be "a theology of the Third Article." It is quite evident that the author of this dogmatics is seeking a solution of the dilemma which confronts German theology, whose golden calf of theological problematics and philosophical speculations, of Higher Criticism and blatant Liberalism has now been pulverized, and in being compelled to drink their former idol the Germans no longer ask: Where is the *gracious* God? but rather: Where is *God*? The author's answer is: The Church of today must orient its theology in *Christus praesens*, in as real and meaningful a presence of Christ as His presence *in carne*. In developing this theme the author makes many overstatements and draws many unwarranted conclusions. Nevertheless, he also presents many basic truths in such a gripping manner that the American Lutheran theologian will derive much benefit from a study of this work. We shall therefore endeavor to present a synopsis of Dilschneider's dogmatics, rather than an extensive critique.

First a word as to Dilschneider's dogmatic method. The *Christus praesens* in every period of human history results in a tension between faith and doubt, between *tentatio fidei* and *confessio fidei*. Dogmatics must therefore study the particular form in which this tension confronted man in the various periods of the history of dogma. In Abraham's case the tension resolved itself in an "existential confession" of monotheism.



In the case of Peter the tension between faith and unbelief (exemplified in Matt. 16:16 and v. 22) is finally resolved in the New Testament confession of *Christus-kyrios*, the paradoxical confession that the Crucified is Lord over sin and death, Rom. 10:9; Acts 2:36. In the ancient Church the tension between faith and unbelief revolved about the problem of monotheism versus polytheism as it came to a head in the controversies concerning the true Godhead of the pre-existent Christ and the Holy Spirit. The Church solved this tension in the Nicene Creed. A little later the twofold nature of the incarnate Christ became the focal point of this tension and the Chalcedonian Creed expressed in an existential manner the solution of this tension. In the Lutheran Reformation everything revolved about the question: How can man find a gracious God? And Luther's answer to this question became the existential and dynamic center of his entire theology. But according to Dilschneider these three great confessional periods are insufficient for today, particularly in view of the fact that modern man has rejected the unified *Weltanschauung* of the Middle Ages and has turned to a philosophy which is a religion not only *sine Christo*, but actually *contra Christum*. Dilschneider holds that the philosophies of a Kant, Lessing, Hegel, Fichte (man is the measure of all things), the emasculated Christianity of a Schleiermacher (a dogmatic with Jesus, but without Christ), the scientific method of Haeckel (his *Weltraetsel*, intended to be a program for the enlightened man of today has become the obituary of the twentieth century), the *Entmythologisierung* advocated by Bultmann and Hirsch (Biblical scholarship must eliminate all the mythological elements of the New Testament) — all these trends in natural science and philosophy of the past four hundred years have brought the old tension of faith and unbelief before the Church in a new form. The central problem today is: What is the relation of God to man? Here according to Dilschneider is the focal point of modern man's tension between faith and unbelief, and therefore a dogmatics for modern man must have as its *Leitmotif* the solution of this tension in the doctrines of ecclesiology and eschatology, in other words, the *Christus praesens* confronts man today in the truths expressed in the Third Article of our Creed. These truths must become dynamically existential. He therefore rejects the speculative method of the Ritschl-Harnack tradition and considers also the Lundensian *eros-agape Leitmotif* as inadequate. Both in his opinion fail to do justice to the dynamic which is present in the tension between "*Glaubensangefochtenheit und Glaubensbewaehrung im Glaubensbekenntnis*." Dilschneider's method is in our opinion a good example of both the strong and the weak points of German problematics. Problematics usually stresses some neglected point in a doctrine, but does it in such a one-sided manner that other important points recede into the background. A dogmatic method which fails to recognize that the tensions and their solution are essentially always the same will fail to solve the very problems which it raises.

Dilschneider makes a plea for a new theological orientation in which a "theology of revelation" is so presented that the great soteriological facts bring modern man into an encounter with the *Christus praesens*, be that Christ present in the Old Testament, in His incarnation, or in the New Testament period. In other words, Dilschneider wishes to treat all theology from the Trinitarian viewpoint, in which each of the Three Articles of the Christian faith receives its due recognition. In developing this, Dilschneider becomes very speculative at times. However, when one considers that German Liberalism and Neo-Orthodoxy move in philosophical patterns, one can understand, at least to a degree, why conservative theologians in their rebuttal resort to problematics.

On the basis of 1 Cor. 10:1-4 Dilschneider speaks of a *real* revelation in the Old Testament, real (*res*) in contrast to *personal*. He finds the *realis praesentia* of Christ in the pillar of fire, in the Rock, and calls this the "*offenbarungsmorphologische Charakter*" of the Old Testament. He holds that the "word of the Lord" (*dabar*), found 112 times in the Prophets, is a soteriological activity. The word (*dabar*) is not to be identified with the Hellenistic *logos*, but is really the act of revelation and not a static knowledge. No doubt in contrast to Barthian theology Dilschneider finds the revelatory act of God during the Old Testament in the work of creation and in the history of Israel, so that the *dabar* or the Johannine *logos* is conceived of as the center of creation. In other words, in creation Christ meets man *realiter*, not *personaliter*. This is for him the morphology of Christology, in which Christ is first "*Gestalt*," inasmuch as He reveals Himself in the activity of creation; in which Christ is furthermore the "*Inhalt*," as Christ is revealed in soteriology, and, finally, in which Christ is "*Gewalt*," as revealed in eschatology. Dilschneider feels that creation is a revelation of Christ, for in creation Christ takes on "the cosmic force of a servant." The travail (Rom. 8:22) is a revelation of Christ's suffering (Second Article) and the final consummation of the world an eschatological revelation (Third Article). In his *personal* revelation the same Christ groans in the Garden of Gethsemane, even as the entire creation groans (Rom. 8:22). But the "cosmic Christ" will strip off the weakness of creation and reveal Himself *spiritualiter* in eschatology.

Dilschneider sees history as God's revelation when interpreted by God's *dabar*, for it shows man not only God's wrath, but the history of Israel in particular speaks of a deliverance from sin. This highly speculative presentation may be meaningful for European theologians, who are under the influence of Kant, Ritschl, or Barth, or have followed the Harnack-Hirsch tradition, which ruled out the Old Testament as the dynamic Word of God. American Lutheran theologians have a much more direct way to find Christ in the swaddling clothes of the Old Testament.

In the New Testament a metamorphosis (*Gestaltswandel*) in the revelation has taken place. Dilschneider maintains that an ontological Chris-

tology which emphasizes the person and the natures of Christ, likewise a soteriological Christology which places all emphasis on Christ's work, must make room today for a morphological Christology. On the basis of 2 Cor. 3:17 Dilschneider argues that Christ died to be the Lord and that this Lordship is at the same time a "living in the Spirit." Christ confronts us today as "the Lord the Spirit," so that the Church today truly has a morphological Christology, since it has Christ of the First, the Second, and also of the Third Article.

The important question for Dilschneider now is: What does the *Christus praesens* proclaim to us? How and where does He do it? God's *jadah*, 1 Cor. 8:3, is a creative act whereby we know Christ as Lord. This creation means that a person is a new creature in Christ. In developing this thought, justification is repeatedly referred to, but it appears to this reviewer that it must recede into the background. Dilschneider presents some excellent insights into the work of Christ as completely forgiving man's guilt and sin; for example, in contrasting the Roman Catholic and the Lutheran view of justification he describes the Roman view as "*Begnadung*" and the Lutheran as "*Begnadigung*," and wishes to distinguish sharply between justification and sanctification lest one fall into the Roman error. The little word "and" in the phrase "justification and sanctification" may become fatal, either by identifying the two, as Rome does, or by completely separating the two, as may happen in dead orthodoxy.

According to Dilschneider, Christ is present today *spiritualiter*, not only in judgment and grace, that is, in the doctrine of justification, but also in the Church, which is the mystical body of Christ in Word and Sacrament. It is at this point where, in our opinion, Dilschneider's problematics is least helpful. If we understood him correctly, he holds that the *ecclesia* is *Christus praesens spiritualiter* for this aeon. In the Church through Word and Sacraments He confronts us as the suffering Servant and the exalted Lord. In the Third Article the soteriologically accomplished work of the Second Article becomes an existential reality. It seems that Dilschneider states in highly philosophical terminology what Luther stated so simply: "In welcher Christenheit das Heilige Geist mir taeglich und reichlich alle Suenden vergibt." The author is much more lucid when he discusses the proclamation of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments as Christ's only means to engender faith. Here he takes issue with Reformed-Barthian theology.

The value of Dilschneider's dogmatics lies in its emphasis on pneumatology, ecclesiology, eschatology. But we question his method; at least we find it difficult to follow him when he states in conclusion that the Three Articles are problems of a cosmic, a physiological, and a morphological Christology, and that of three the last is today most relevant, since it shows us the form (*morphe*) in which Christ confronts us through the

Church and the Word. We believe that Dilschneider's concern can best be met if we take seriously Luther's theology as epitomized in his exposition of the Creed in the Large Catechism.

F. E. MAYER

THE REFORMATION OF THE CHURCHES. By James H. Leuba. The Beacon Press, Boston. 1950. 219 pages, 5½×8½. \$2.75.

The purpose of this posthumously published work is to demonstrate the need for the Church to surrender its proclamation about "prayer, sacraments, talk about God and His only Son, who died on the Cross for the redemption of our sins" (p. 168). The method which the author employs is to prove, by means of surveys among various groups, that historic Christianity is irrelevant to modern man.

Both the purpose and the method are extremely suspect. The author seems pathetically unaware of what Christianity is. And his method seems to presuppose that God is standing for election by a show of hands.

In short, the title of the book is deceiving, and the contents of the book would date it as an antiquated naturalism rather than the theological work it pretends to be.

JAROSLAV PELIKAN

MARRIAGE IS WHAT YOU MAKE IT. By Paul Popenoe, Sc. D. The Macmillan Company, New York. 221 pages, 5¼×8. \$3.00.

We find this a very interesting and helpful book on marriage counseling. The publishers introduce it thus: "The honeymoon is over and you find yourself face to face with the reality of marriage—and it isn't at all what you expected. You suddenly begin to see faults in the person you have picked for a life-long partner and it begins to look like your marriage is not really a partnership either! And what do you do now? . . . Dr. Popenoe for over twenty years has been providing satisfactory solutions to these problems, and now in this book he passes on to the lay reader the many principles which he has found helpful in solving common marital problems."

The author himself says in the preface: "Most of the failures in marriage are unnecessary; they could be prevented by proper education before marriage. Even lacking such education, they can be prevented by a reasonable amount of effort, intelligently directed, after marriage."

"Husbands and wives often fail because they do not try to succeed. They are not willing to give to marriage the same study and determination that they would give to a job in the business or industrial world. Others are willing and anxious to make a determined effort, but do not know how to apply this effort effectively.

"This book is intended to give them some of the necessary know-how."

A special feature of this volume is the great number of case histories used by the writer to illustrate and drive home his points. It must be borne in mind that the viewpoint is that of psychology, not of Christianity. The Christian element in such counseling will have to be supplied by the pastor himself.

O. E. SOHN

TOWARDS CHRISTIAN DEMOCRACY. By Stafford Cripps. Philosophical Library, New York. C. 1946. 101 pages,  $5\frac{1}{2} \times 8\frac{3}{4}$ . \$2.00.

This book, though written in the closing months of World War II, is reviewed now because it is one of the most explicit statements of the Socialist assumptions concerning the Christian religion and as such at opposite poles from the literature spearheaded at the moment by John T. Flynn and Carl McIntyre. Sir Stafford Cripps played quite a part before World War II in the World Alliance for Promoting International Friendship Through the Churches and was vocal for many years in Anglican lay movements seeking to realize social aims through the Christian religion. He feels that the Christian Church has failed to offer the stimulus necessary for social gains of peace. "We could indeed afford to give our scientists a rest, if our religious leaders would take up the task of bringing our moral and spiritual progress into line with our material progress" (p. 31). Repeatedly he qualifies the method: "That is not to say that the religious leaders should go into politics, but rather that they should be prepared quite fearlessly to lay down the Christian principles which are to be followed, leaving it to the lay-men and women to interpret those principles in terms of political action" (p. 30). He does not hesitate to attack the profit motive, again qualifying by distinguishing between two categories of private property: "The first is constituted of all those articles that are required for personal use and enjoyment, such as the home, the garden, furniture, pictures, musical instruments, clothing, and so forth, the possession of which does not affect the relationship of the individual to other individuals. . . . The second category is quite different in its incidence upon human relationships. This category includes the ownership of land and of any means of production other than for personal use. This class of property does alter the relationship between individuals, because it puts one person in the power of another" (p. 58). He sees three ways of dealing with the problem of property: "The first is to accept the danger and to attempt to moderate or eliminate it by the conversion of all people to true Christian ideals in human relationships, so that the danger is overcome by the goodness of the individual, to work for the state of affairs in which every landowner and employer conducts his affairs according to true Christian principle. The second is for the community or State to step in and so regulate conditions of tenants and employees as to remove as much of the danger as possible. In other words, for the State to protect the individuals against what is recognized as the inevitable dangers of the situation. This method can of course be employed side by side with the first. . . . The third alternative is to remove the danger by abolishing all types of private property that give one individual power over another, and to place that property in the hands of a democratically controlled State . . . the democracy controlling the State's actions must be imbued with the Christian spirit" (pp. 59—61). Sir Stafford Cripps is able in recognizing factors in the diagnosis of modern



society. "The laws that we as democratic electors have enacted, the customs that we as citizens have built up, and the social habits which in our separate interests we are daily creating and changing, all form part of those surroundings to our life which play so large a part in determining whether it is practicable for us to live lives according to our Christian faith" (p. 15). He resents the fashion in which the established Church surrendered to political or social expediency. "The parson in this country was looked upon as the squire's junior colleague and not as one of the people" (p. 28).

The author is also aware of the need for powerful motivations toward social improvement: "We must replace the competitive fear, the negative impulse, by the positive power of love and brotherhood. These latter forces are in themselves the most powerful that exist in the human being. It is only for love and self-sacrifice that men and women will give their all, including life itself. This they will never do for fear or for the mere acquisition of wealth or power" (p. 77).

Sir Stafford Cripps envisions the nature of the contribution which the Christian religion makes to his program as primarily the provision of a code of conduct. "'Go—sell all thou hast and give to the poor' was an injunction given to enable the rich young man to exercise unbiased his moral judgment" (p. 7). He lists five objectives:

- "1. Equality of opportunity for youth and others.
- "2. Jobs for those who can work.
- "3. Security for those who need it.
- "4. The ending of privilege for the few.

"5. The preservation of civil liberties for all" (p. 9), and says: "If we could fully accomplish only these five objectives in a comparatively short period, we might at least claim to have played some part in carrying out our Master's direction: 'This do, and thou shalt live'" (pp. 9—10). "When we claim that we want justice, liberty, and things of that kind, we are setting up a moral standard which we claim as essential to our future well-being. Yet we must have some firm foundation for that standard. Mere expediency, just what suits us at the moment, is like shifting sands, providing no foundation at all. We must have convictions, beliefs or faith in some sort of moral laws, in some kind of right for which we must be prepared to stand up at all costs. Christianity does provide youth with just that moral code by which they can judge opinions and actions regarding the future. True Christian conduct will never leave them in any doubt as to what is just and right" (p. 39). Christ's demonstration of the attitude of love is His contribution to Christian democracy.

Manifestly this religio-political theory is as ineffective in its way as the contrasting one that God is on the side of the biggest bank rolls. Sir Stafford Cripps still leaves the field open for a thoroughly Christian pronouncement by a Christian layman on the Christian sources of citizenship in a democracy.

RICHARD R. CAEMMERER



